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10 COVER STORY

CONCEALED CARRY MASTERPIECE

Wilson Combat raises the bar for the CCW holder with a great carry 1911 in 9mm. With features and options galore, this carry gun is perfect for the seasoned professional. *By Terrill Hoffman*



THE COVER:
Image by
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Cover Gun by
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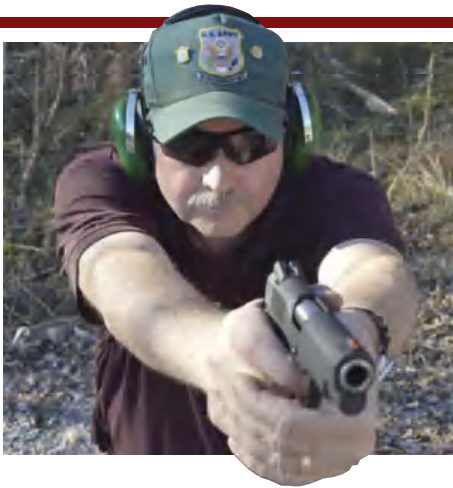
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KYLE SIEBERTS

Summer Fun = Summer Smarts

The beginning of summer is one of my favorite times of the year. Even though this is our Fall issue, summer is in full swing right now, baseball is heating up, cooks are dusting off their barbeque grills, and at my local range there is just about every form of competitive shooting available, from Benchrest, to IPSC and IDPA and 3-gun, to black powder and archery.

With all of the warm-weather activities to grab our attention, the shooting sports are an excellent way to connect with fellow shooters, get out and enjoy the day, and burn some gunpowder. Competitive shooting is also an outstanding way to hone skills for those that choose to carry concealed. Many of the shooting games are just that — games, but many of the skills learned and used on the range during competition are transferrable to the CCW holder, or the person concerned with personal and home defense.

Even basic gun-handling skills are useful to the CCW holder — they help a user to gain additional confidence with their equipment and in themselves. Even if you don't have a desire to engage in competitive shooting, just going to the range on a regular basis is going to pay dividends if you ever are required to draw your handgun in defense of life.

So, get out and enjoy the summer barbeques and family gatherings, but take some time and take advantage of this great time of year to hone your defensive skills at the range, as well.

Regards!

—Steve Sieberts, Editor

Steve Sieberts has over 40 years in the firearms field, including 17 years as a professional gunsmith and 10 years as a Chief Gunsmith for a classified DoD facility. He also spent four years with the Army Shooting Team and holds the Distinguished Pistol Shot Badge, the President's Hundred Tab, and belongs to the NRA 2600 Club. He has been writing about firearms for many publications for over 20 years.

FALL 2015

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Better Your Game: Products & Tips



Improve Your Trigger Control

Shooting tips are like belly buttons, everybody has them. Some tips are handed down from generation to generation, and may or may not actually be effective guidelines.

Some are excellent, like this one from Instructor Mike Foley, who is an active IPSC and IDPA competitor and is sponsored by Wilson Combat. This tip is a good one to determine whether you have achieved a high level of trigger control:

Place a standard white paster on a standard IPSC or IDPA target and move back 3 yards. Taking your time, you should be able to keep all of your shots inside the paster. If you're heeling the shot or other-

wise anticipating, the results will be obvious. The paster, being a 1-inch square, will instantly show any shots that land outside of it, if your trigger control is below excellent.

Notice on the second photo, my son had to adjust his hold since the gun was shooting a little high, but once he was zeroed, all shots landed inside the paster.

For bonus points, call each shot. That means you should be able to tell where the shot went (for example, high right, or low left), based on the relationship of the front sight to rear sight when the gun was fired.

Try it the next time you're at the range — it's a great drill to sharpen your trigger control skills.



Enhance Your Accuracy

COMPANY: Barnes

WEBSITE: www.BarnesBullets.com

Barnes has added the 125 grain bullet to their 357 TAC-XPD line of handgun cartridges. The all-copper bullet is loaded with low-flash powder for best results in low light defensive situations, and offers excellent accuracy and expansion which is critical in a defensive load.

Fine-Tune Your Game

Many people that enjoy the shooting sports may wonder just how good that new pistol, or that new factory load that they just spent \$40 on, really is. There are a few ways to determine this. One is to read magazines like this to see the reviews by some of the top firearms writers in the country. Or you can do your own testing, and this is the route I like to take.

In order to test your own firearms or ammunition, you need the right equipment. Two pieces of critical test equipment are the Ransom Rest, and the Oehler 35P chronograph.

The Ransom Rest removes the human element from the accuracy testing of a handgun or handgun/ammunition combination. I've used a Ransom Rest to test literally hundreds of 1911s I built for DoD personnel for over a decade.

The Oehler 35P is the gold standard for measuring bullet velocity and shows the High, Low, Mean and Standard Deviation. It really demonstrates the consistency of the ammunition.

Whether you are testing a new custom or factory gun, factory loads or your own custom handloads, these tools are invaluable.



Pocket Toolbox

COMPANY: Brownells

WEBSITE: www.Brownells.com

This is a quality multi-purpose tool that should be in every range bag for times when things break or need adjustment, and they will. It's four inches long and slips into the shirt pocket or pants.

With a pair of pliers, knife, box end wrench, screwdriver and so much more, the pocket-packable multi-tool for field repair is a great utensil. (Also listed as Multi-Tasker - AR-15/M16 Multitasker Series 3 Multitool, and available in black or tan.)




Firearms Refinishing

COMPANY: Accurate Plating and Weaponry

WEBSITE: www.APWCogan.com

Every firearm, at some point, will need to be refinished. Whether it's a traditional blueing job, Parkerizing, or one of the newer coatings. APW can do it all. In addition, they are a full-service custom shop. APW also performs the full spectrum of custom gunsmithing and can build or modify most firearms from basic carry guns to full-sized revolvers, and all types of firearms for hunting and competition.

The company specializes in applying Cerakote finishes, which can be had in a variety of colors including blue, purple and stoplight red for a truly custom firearm. In addition to the newer polymer coatings like Cerakote, APW also performs more traditional coatings and plating such as nickel, black chrome and industrial hard chrome, the latter of which can be applied over all types of steels, including stainless. 



CONCEALED CARRY **MASTERPIECE**

Wilson Combat's Carry Compact

BY TERRILL HOFFMAN



“Once someone commits to carrying a concealed weapon, they are taking the role of a dog standing between the wolves and the sheep.”

In the world of concealed carry handguns, are you ready to step up to the major leagues and play with the big boys? A better way to phrase the question would be to ask if you are ready for your second or third concealed carry handgun.

The reason I ask is that Wilson Combat of Berryville, AR has sent me their Carry Compact in 9mm for evaluation, and this is not the normal handgun selected by a novice.

There is a substantial learning curve, or progression, to the process of carrying a concealed handgun. Many are drawn into the concept of concealed carry by some perceived “cool” factor, but these misguided souls quickly fall to the wayside. They experience the discomfort of carrying a couple of pounds of metal strapped to their sides on a daily basis and soon set it aside. It is the wiser among you that actually understand and adopt the true principle behind concealed carry.

The world is made up of three types of individuals with the majority being either predator or prey. The third group (the smallest of the three) is comprised of those people willing to stand guard between the first two. Once someone commits to carrying a concealed weapon, they are taking the role of a dog standing between the wolves and the sheep. It is this small group that will learn to adjust to the hardships of carrying a firearm and seek out the best solutions in both handguns and holsters.

This group of “guard dogs” normally starts off training with the latest, greatest, mass-produced handguns offered by the major factories. It is not until they gain greater skills and become more proficient that they go in search

SPECIFICATIONS - WILSON COMBAT

Model: Carry Compact
Caliber: 9mm Luger (.45 ACP and .38 Super available)
Magazine Capacity: 8 rounds (9mm)
Barrel: 4-inch Fluted Stainless Barrel
Overall Length: 7.6 inches
Sight Radius: 5.6 inches
Height: 4.9 inches
Width: 1.3 inches
Sights: Wilson Battlesight Rear, Snag Free Tritium Front
MSRP: From \$3650

“There is nothing “cool” about carrying a concealed handgun. Many look at it as a right, but I consider it an obligation.”



Wilson Combat builds an accurate handgun, and then they give you a good set of sights so you can improve your own accuracy.

of a better tool. Talk with anyone in this group and they will confess to having a box of holsters sitting in a closet. These all looked and felt good until the shooter tried them for an extended time period. These shooters will probably also confess to having tried more than one handgun during their training. Once a shooter reaches

a certain skill level they look away from fads and mass-production in search of the ultimate firearm.

WILSON COMBAT

This is where a company such as Wilson Combat comes to the forefront of firearm manufacturers. What began as a small gunsmith business in the mid-seventies has grown to what many would consider the best custom house in the business. Bill earned his reputation as being a master of working with the 1911 pistols, but now he has an entire company filled with excellent gunsmiths. Each one could carry the title of “master craftsman” in their own right.

Wilson Combat has also expanded their products to include pistols other than the 1911, as well as AR-patterned rifles and combat shotguns. However, it is their work with the Model 1911 handguns that is the mainstay of Wilson Combat. They are currently producing too many variations to list here but each and every 1911 handgun is totally built in their factory using only Wilson Combat parts. Each handgun is hand fitted, tuned, and tested before heading out to the customer.

If I sound a bit overzealous in my praise of Bill Wilson and his company forgive me. However, when you start a small company and build it up to the point of being a “Firearms Empire,” you deserve credit for your accomplishment. A business will only grow if you produce a product cheaply or with

quality. Wilson Combat’s handguns are not cheap, but they are of the highest level of quality.

WILSON’S CARRY COMPACT

Proof of their quality can be found in their Carry Compact, a handgun tailored for the concealed carry market. Shorter in most dimensions than the standard Model 1911, the Carry Compact is well suited for the role of everyday carry. The sample sent in had one major difference than the standard Carry Compact; the frame was carbon steel instead of aluminum. This resulted in the sample being slightly heavier than the base Carry Compact model, but it does point out an advantage of ordering from Wilson Combat. Even when you order a base model there are dozens of options offered to the point that your handgun is tailored to your desires and needs.

The Carry Compact starts off with a Wilson frame than is ½-inch smaller in the grip length and a matching slide that is 1-inch shorter than a full sized Model 1911. The back corner of the grip frame is also rounded to make this handgun as compact as possible. When I mention a matching slide I am dead seri-

The barrel bushing is gone and so is the typical crown. The cone-shaped barrel is perfectly fitted to the slide and the bevel crown stays well protected.





If our history is correct, it was shortly after WW II when Colt first offered the 1911 in 9mm. This cartridge is a good fit for the smaller Carry Compact. Recoil is greatly reduced over that of the .45 ACP, and modern improvements to bullet designs have improved its stopping power.

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ous. The slide is fitted to the frame rails to where there is no wobble whatsoever, yet pulling the slide back will make you feel as if it is on ball bearings. The frame has a straight one-piece Bullet Proof (Wilson's brand name) Magwell/Mainspring Housing that offers a substantial bevel to the magazine well to aid in reloading.

The mainspring housing and front strap of the grip are both finished with a 30 line-per-inch checkering to improve the grip. Sitting above the mainspring housing is the Concealment Bullet Proof Beavertail Grip Safety. The grip safety not only prevents the weapons from firing before you have a firm grip on the handgun, but its beavertail cups the hammer tang to prevent it from snagging on clothing while being drawn.

The sample pistol came with a Tactical Bullet Proof Thumb Safety mounted on the left side of the frame but an ambidextrous unit is available as an option. It is areas such as the thumb safety that the care and precision of this pistol really shines. Fitting a 1911 safety may not be that difficult, but when you feel the positive snap of the safety engaging, or being disengaged, you know care has been taken in its installation. You know the safety is either on or off and the amount of force needed to move

the safety is tuned just right.

The slide is sized to hold a 4-inch barrel with an enlarged muzzle, which allows the elimination of the barrel bushing while still maintaining the traditional swinging link design provided by Browning. The barrel muzzle has a cone shaped crown, which would be called a "target crown" if it was on a rifle, and an extended feed ramp to accommodate the 9mm chambering.

There is a set of flutes milled into the body of the barrel as well as a second set milled into the chamber area. Yes, even I will admit that this fluting has the "cool" factor, but they lighten the barrel and give any dust or grime a place to gather without hindering operation of the short-recoil operating system. Once the slide and barrel lock into battery, all barrel movement is eliminated.

The "dropped and flared" ejection port has become a standard improvement in the industry over the basic Model 1911, but the 30 lines-per-inch serrations along the top of the slide to prevent glare while sighting is a feature found only on the top-of-the-line firearms. This feature is also carried over with 40 LPI serrations to the rear of the slide and the back of the rear sight.

Your sight options when ordering a Wilson





“Handgun maintenance is essential to prevent malfunctions, and regular cleaning and proper lubrication are important to ensuring the handgun functions properly.”

Combat handgun are bountiful and the sample Carry Compact came with a Snag Free Tritium “night sight” up front and a fixed Wilson Combat Battlesight rear unit. The width of the rear slot and the front blade provide ample space and lighting to allow even an aging shooter to maintain a good sight picture in just about any lighting conditions.

The trigger on the Carry Combat is a medium length unit with about 1/8 inch free travel take-up. At that point there is no movement until a 3 1/2 pound pull is provided to release the trigger with a crisp break.

The interesting aspect of the Carry Compact is the amount of time it takes looking at this handgun until you identify the subtle details of its construction. The magazine release is slightly longer than standard, which allows for a positive release, and as you would expect, all of the magazines fell free once released. The bottom of the slide, as well as the front of the slide and frame dust cover, is beveled and there are no sharp points at all on the handgun. The slide stop stud is even countersunk in the frame to prevent it from interfering with the shooter.

RANGE SESSIONS

Now is the time where I make a confession. As soon as this firearm arrived, I grabbed some old

reloaded ammunition ran down to my range to play. I was rudely awakened with a failure to feed after the first shot. Needless to say this was not expected. I was somewhat humbled once I measured the reloads to find that they were slightly over the standard length of a 9mm. However, this did lead me to investigate Wilson Combat’s website a little more in depth. They have totally embraced the concept of modern communication with their website, Facebook, and YouTube.

It was on their site that I came across the break-in procedure for handguns. It was suggested that the first thing you need to do was to fully load the magazines and allow them to sit for a day or so. Once I followed their instructions, as well as upgrading my ammunition selection, any and all problems disappeared. During my next trip to the

PERFORMANCE

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
Winchester 147 grain FMJ	925	2.12 inches
Hornady 115 grain FTX	1,117	1.75 inches
Sig Sauer 124 grain Elite	1,103	1.50 inches

Notes: Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity is average of 10 shots in fps measured 10 feet from muzzle, and accuracy in inches for the best five-shot group at 25 yards.



There is a reason the design of the Model 1911 has survived for over 100 years; it's good! To make it even better, Wilson Combat has tweaked it to perfection.

range I was accompanied by a selection of 115 grain Hornady Critical Defense, Sig Sauer 124 grain JHP, and Winchester 147 grain FMJ ammunition. The handgun's performance was flawless even though it was obvious I could use the practice. It was during this session that I really started to appreciate the design of the Wilson sights. It will not be long before my own Colt Commander will be wearing a new set of Wilson's sights.

Wilson Combat has a stated guarantee of 1 1/2-inch groups at 25 yards but I was only able to obtain this standard with the Sig Sauer hollow points. Even then I only matched this standard with one group and most others ran closer to 1 3/4 or 2 inches. There was very little velocity lost with the shortened barrel and even the 147 grain Winchester load reached an average of 975 feet per second. The Hornady 115 grain load was the lightest and the fastest tested with an average speed of 1,117 feet per second. The


Sig Sauer split the difference between the other two loads and averaged 1,103 feet per second. The quality of this handgun and the performance I obtained just prove to me that in this case it was the shooter that could not maintain the 1 1/2-inch guarantee.

During rapid fire drills this handgun excelled. It had the same feel as my Commander, but the recoil of the 9mm was much less than that of the .45 ACP. As I noted before, the sights on this pistol were outstanding.

THE BOTTOM LINE

After two serious range sessions, and one play day with a couple of other shooters, I had no doubt this pistol was a major step above the average handgun. It is smaller than the average Model 1911 and much easier to carry for an extended time, which

means you are more likely to maintain the habit of carrying concealed. At the same time, the Carry Compact sets the standard for a carry pistol and it is up to you to achieve the skill set needed to really appreciate its quality. You also have another decision to make. The Carry Compact is available in .45 ACP, .38 Super and 9mm Luger. The improvement over the past few years in 9mm ammunition will make this a hard decision and I would feel comfortable with all three cartridges.

There is nothing "cool" about carrying a concealed handgun. Many look at it as a right, but I consider it an obligation. Hopefully you will never be in a life or death situation and the day will come when you can pass the obligation of protecting your flock to the younger members of the clan. When that day comes you can relax with the knowledge that a Wilson Combat pistol is built to outlast several generations. 

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“These days, the range bag has evolved into a more specialized shooting accessory.”

SHOOTER'S LUGGAGE

5 Hot Range Bags for Handgunners

BY STEVE SIEBERTS

In the world of pistol shooting, the lowly range bag is the Rodney Dangerfield of necessary shooting equipment.

It takes a backseat to the gun, ammo, eye protection and hearing protection, but it shouldn't. If it can carry everything we need, it seems like that's good enough.

I once was as guilty as anyone else. When I first started shooting IPSC at the old Southwest Pistol League in Southern California, I carried everything in a couple of GI ammo cans, but I was 19 and didn't know

any better. Later, I used a GI ALICE pack, which is a rucksack, and then athletic sports bags. Eventually, I started using range bags specifically designed for shooting, and you're about to see why.

These days, the range bag has evolved into a more specialized shooting accessory. In the following story, we have selected five options, all of which have unique features specific to the bag. To be sure, this roundup is a sample of the current crop of bags available, but it is by no means all-encompassing.

1 BLACKHAWK!

SPORTSTER DELUXE

The first bag we'll look at is the BLACKHAWK! Sportster Deluxe range bag. This bag is constructed of heavy duty black 600 denier polyester, and like everything else that comes from Blackhawk!, is very high quality and may last forever.

One nice feature is the PVC panel at the bottom. When I start putting in multiple guns, loaded magazines, ammo and more, having a reinforced panel at the bottom of the bag is very reassuring. The bag has the largest heavy-duty zippers of all of the bags reviewed, and has the familiar strap to pull the two top zippers that open the top flap of the bag.

The outside of the bag has two large pockets and multiple rows of S.T.R.I.K.E© webbing for attaching pouches and other accessories. The bag's interior has two large zippered pouches for tools, magazines and other necessities.

You carry the bag with a sturdy carrying strap and two handles that can be bound together with the Velcro flap.

THE DIMENSIONS

15L x 11W x 10D inches

The Blackhawk! bag has a solid bottom and multiple compartments.

“Each bag may have some features that appeal to you more than others, depending on how you work with your equipment.”



The Blackhawk! Sportster Deluxe range bag is a high quality bag that will last for a very long time.

2 **BROWNELLS**

SIGNATURE SERIES SHOOTING BAG

THE DIMENSIONS
15L x 13W x 9D inches

The second bag on our list is the Brownells Signature Series Shooting Bag. This premium range bag is available in Hunter Green and Dark Brown. It's constructed from 1000 denier, Cordura nylon and comes with bellows pockets, shotshell holders, and adjustable dividers.

What sets this bag apart is the suede leather on the top, pull strap and front handle, and the brass furniture construction. This is definitely the nicest-looking bag and the brass and leather really make it

stand out from the other basic black bags.

It has a padded carrying strap, which makes it comfortable to carry when weighted down with guns and ammo. It has numerous outside pouches, and one has a convenient elastic opening with a drain hole for sand or water to escape.

Don't let the suede and brass fool you, the Brownells bag is not all show-and-no-go, it has all of the features you need and is a quality piece of equipment.



The Brownells shooting bag is the nicest of the group, with suede handles and brass fittings, it definitely looks like a quality piece of luggage, not a range bag.



Shotgun shell loops and extra compartments make the Brownells bag very convenient.

3 SAFARILAND SHOOTER'S RANGE BAG

The third bag for review is the Safariland Shooter's Range Bag. This bag has a removable interior bag that has padded and zippered panels for carrying up to four handguns and extra magazines. The interior bag also has zippered openings on both sides, removable and adjustable interior panels, and a carrying handle.

Made from heavy duty nylon, the bag has a reinforced pull handle for the dual-zippered top flap. It also has large outside pockets for carrying gear and a convenient plastic ID window. One feature I especially like is that the zipper handles are knotted parachute cord, or some type of heavy fabric. There's no way they'll ever break off. The bag has dual handles that Velcro together, but it's lacking a carrying strap.

THE DIMENSIONS
14L x 9W x 10D inches

BAG SPECS

BLACKHAWK! SPORTSTER DELUXE RANGE BAG

MSRP: \$61.45

www.Blackhawk.com

BROWNELLS SIGNATURE SERIES SHOOTING BAG

MSRP: \$129.99

www.Brownells.com

SAFARILAND SHOOTER'S RANGE BAG

MSRP: \$78.00

www.Safariland.com

MIDWAY COMPETITION RANGE BAG

MSRP: From \$59.99

www.MidwayUSA.com

DILLON PRECISION DILLON BLACK RANGE BAG

MSRP: \$89.95

www.DillonPrecision.com

The Safariland range bag.



This is a nice touch. The Safariland bag has a place for the shooter's ID card or range membership card.



The top view of the Safariland range bag shows the configurable compartments. This is almost a necessity for today's modern shooter who may shoot more than one discipline.





The Midway bag has a brass pouch that sifts the dirt out, an inner bag, and a zippered pouch.



The bottom of the Midway bag has hardened plastic feet to keep the bottom of the bag from being scuffed.

The Midway bag has is a basic black nylon bag, but with extra features inside.

4 MIDWAY COMPETITION RANGE BAG

The fourth bag in this review is the Midway Competition Range Bag. This is a bag that I've used for about a year. It's made from PVC coated polyester, and has two removable padded pistol rugs, and a removable stage bag/ammunition carrier with handles.

One aspect I like is the separate spent shell bag with vent holes to let out the dirt. Picking up brass and putting it in the bag, usually catches all the range dirt, rocks and twigs, but this bag lets it all escape out the bottom.

Another nice feature is the outer pocket drink holder with a drain hole. I was on the range today at our monthly Steel Showdown match and the range temperature was 102°F! I usually keep a cold bottle of water in the bag to keep hydrated on days like this and the pocket is handy.

The bag has a shoulder carry strap, and plastic feet underneath the bag for support. A total of 9 pockets and configurable internal padded compartments make this bag very versatile.

THE DIMENSIONS
17L x 15W x 10D inches

DON'T LEAVE HOME WITHOUT THESE

No discussion about range bags would be complete without mentioning a few things that should be in every range bag.

1 Eye protection

2 Hearing protection

I would argue that shooters should use ear plugs as well as ear muffs when competing. The reason is that the more the noise is muffled, the better the shooter can concentrate. Double hearing protection helps with this.

3 A trauma kit with a surgical kit, and a tourniquet, a squib rod and small hammer are other essential items

4 Shot timer

5 Spare parts for the gun

6 A 3/16ths punch, as this is a universal repair tool

7 Batteries for hearing protection and/or a shot timer

8 Bug spray, sunscreen

9 Granola or energy bars

10 A silver Sharpie, which is useful for marking on the bottom of black magazines (or black magazine bumper pads, when the magazine starts to malfunction)

11 Band-Aids, a Leatherman, staple gun with spare staples, target pasters, a Smith and Wesson sight screwdriver for adjusting any adjustable sight, pocket knife

12 Otis kit

This is a good start for a handgunner. Rifle and shotgunners may have more specific tools and/or equipment.

5 *DILLON PRECISION*

DILLON BLACK RANGE BAG

The last bag on the list is by no means the least. Known for producing some of the finest reloading equipment in the world and pioneering the progressive reloading machine, Dillon Precision is also known for making high quality products. This quality is reflected in their range bag.

The Dillon bag is a little different from other bags in this review in that the top flap doesn't open with a strap attached to a flap and two zippers. Rather, it's opened similar to a drink cooler, where the two zippers go around the lid, and the lid then opens up. The top lid is a large and solid surface and has two zippered compartments.

The bag has four solid plastic feet on the bottom of the bag. It has configurable internal dividers, and a padded bottom, plus two round front pockets, each 3 inches in diameter for water or soda bottles.

THE DIMENSIONS


12.5L x 7W x 10D inches



The Dillon bag has a multitude of internal and external pockets.

5 GOOD CHOICES

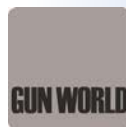
All in all, range bags today are outstanding. They carry all of your equipment and really understand your needs, whether you're a professional 3-gun competitor or a weekend plinker.

Each bag may have some features that appeal to you more than others, depending on how you work with your equipment. But no matter what, these bags will get the job done. 



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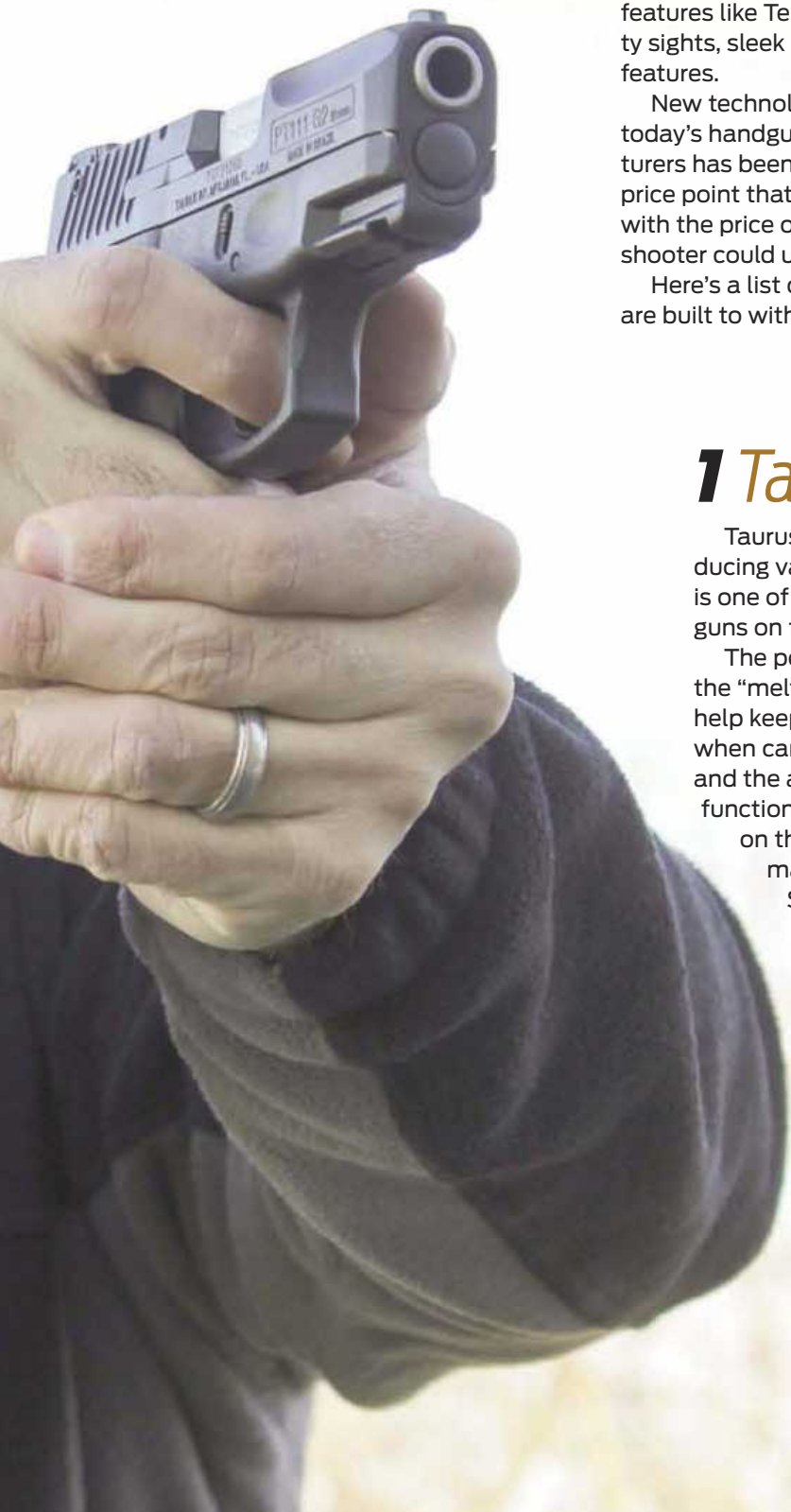
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BARGAIN HANDGUNS

*10 Best Pistols for
Less Than \$500*

BY BRAD FITZPATRICK





The increase in states issuing CCW permits over the last 15 years has caused gun manufacturers to scramble to produce lightweight, compact, handguns that are also affordable.

And they've done it.

Today, there are a number of reliable guns that are priced below \$500, but just because you don't have a lot to spend on your sidearm doesn't mean you'll have to sacrifice quality features like Tenifer slides, ambidextrous controls, high-quality sights, sleek designs and a whole host of innovative safety features.

New technology and high-tech machining processes make today's handguns better than ever, but the trick for manufacturers has been to provide firearms with all those features at a price point that is acceptable for working-class shooters, and with the price of ammunition hitting all-time highs, every shooter could use a little extra cash in his pocket.

Here's a list of guns that come with lots of great features, are built to withstand years of carry, and are priced affordably.

1 *Taurus Millennium G2*

Taurus is one of the leaders when it comes to producing value-priced handguns, and the Millennium G2 is one of the most affordable 9mm striker fire carry guns on the market.

The polymer frame keeps weight to a minimum, and the "melted" edges on the metal slide are designed to help keep the gun from printing and they add comfort when carrying. The grip contour and texture is excellent, and the adjustable three-dot sights are very basic but functional. There are a whole host of safety features

on the G2, including a loaded chamber indicator, manual and trigger safeties, and the Taurus Security System that allows the owner to render the gun inoperable with the turn of a key.

Considering the G2's impressive capacity for a carry gun (12+1), it's surprisingly light, weighing just 22 ounces unloaded.

MSRP \$301.52

Web www.TaurusUSA.com



2 *Smith & Wesson J-Frame*

The J-Frame has served as a backup gun for police officers for decades, and when states began issuing CCW permits during the early 2000s, the J-Frame was a natural choice for concealed carry because it was lightweight, compact and concealable.

Today, the gun is as good as it ever was, thanks in large part to precise machining and high-tech metallurgy, and it remains an affordable choice. Considering that there are so many options available (there are dozens of J-Frame variants, many of which are priced under \$500), there's bound to be a model that works for you.

The Model 642 Airweight has a 1.875-inch barrel, an overall length of just 6.3 inches and weighs just 15 ounces, so it's easy to conceal and comfortable to carry.

MSRP \$469

Web www.Smith-Wesson.com

3 *Walther CCP*

Lightweight semi-autos are all the rage, but the laws of physics dictate that when a gun weighs less, it recoils more. The engineers at Walther wanted to design a compact semi-auto pistol that was lightweight yet was comfortable to shoot, even with hot defense loads.

The gun also had to stand up to Walther's demanding 10,000-round torture test and 20-foot drop tests. It took the brand until 2014 to build their version of the perfect carry gun, but the CCP's immediate success has made it well worth the wait.

The CCP utilizes a fixed-barrel gas blowback design that softens recoil, reduces muzzle rise and doesn't require a heavy spring (the gas system slows rearward impact), so it's very easy to manipulate the slide. It comes with manual and trigger safeties, good sights and the most comfortable grip in this class.

MSRP \$469

Web www.WaltherArms.com





4 *SCCY CPX-1*

In the late 1990s, SCCY founder Joe Roebuck, an engineer by trade, decided to try his hand at building a compact carry pistol that was lightweight and reliable, and he wanted to keep the price low enough that the average shooter could afford the gun. It turned out to be quite a challenge, but after years of hard work, the SCCY CPX-1 and CPX-2 arrived.

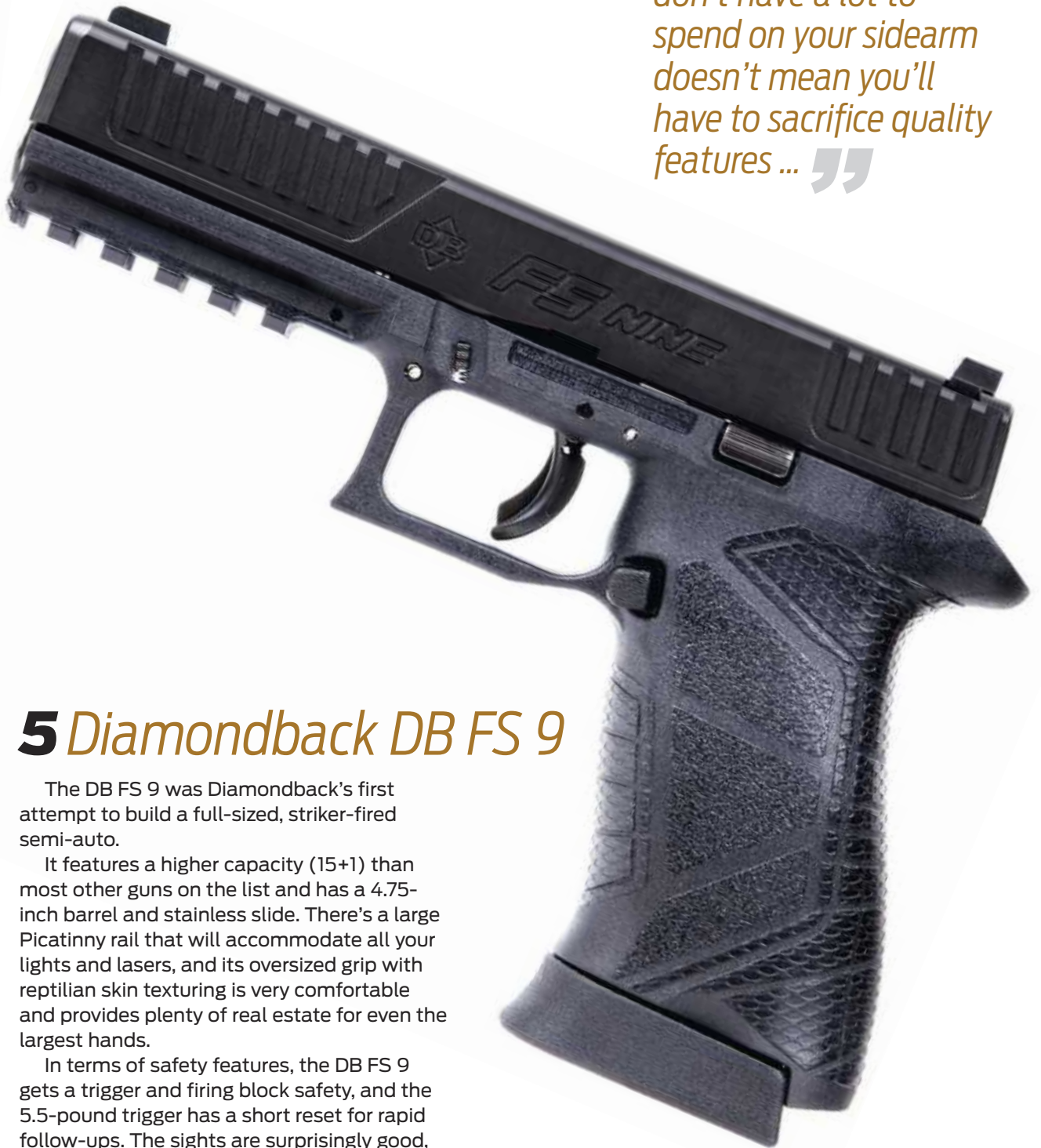
And, slowly, the company is stealing some of the limelight from larger brands because Roebuck designed a very good pistol. The SCCY facility near Daytona Beach, Florida houses new CNC machines that produce the barrel, slide, receiver and all other major parts in-house.

The CPX-1 features a manual safety and the CPX-2 does not, but in all other respects the guns are similar. Unloaded weight is 15 ounces, and the double-stack magazine holds 10 rounds of 9mm ammo. The RE-COIL cushion at the rear of the grip helps mitigate the sharp recoil and allows the shooter to get back on target more quickly, and the heavy (9 pound) trigger pull on this double action-only hammer fired pistol is surprisingly smooth. Starting at \$334 this is quite a lot of gun for the money.

MSRP \$334

Web www.SCCY.com

“... just because you don't have a lot to spend on your sidearm doesn't mean you'll have to sacrifice quality features ...”



5 *Diamondback DB FS 9*

The DB FS 9 was Diamondback's first attempt to build a full-sized, striker-fired semi-auto.

It features a higher capacity (15+1) than most other guns on the list and has a 4.75-inch barrel and stainless slide. There's a large Picatinny rail that will accommodate all your lights and lasers, and its oversized grip with reptilian skin texturing is very comfortable and provides plenty of real estate for even the largest hands.

In terms of safety features, the DB FS 9 gets a trigger and firing block safety, and the 5.5-pound trigger has a short reset for rapid follow-ups. The sights are surprisingly good, with a dovetailed rear and machine front. Large front and rear serrations make it easy to rack the slide, and given the DB FS 9's big-gun dimensions it weighs just 21 ounces unloaded.

MSRP \$483.34

Web www.DiamondbackFirearms.com

6 *Smith & Wesson M&P Shield*

The Shield is a much newer member of the S&W family than the aforementioned J-Frame, but based on the response from the shooting public, it seems the Shield will also become a concealed carry standard like its wheelgun brandmate.

The Shield is available in either 9mm or .40 S&W, and there's an optional manual safety. The slide and barrel are made from hardened stainless steel and the lightweight polymer frame is comfortable. The dovetailed sights are among the very best in the class, and their low-profile design prevents them from hanging up when the gun is drawn. With a frame width of less than an inch, a weight of less than 20 ounces (unloaded) and an overall length of just over 6 inches, it's an easy gun to conceal, but it's robust, reliable and surprisingly accurate given its diminutive size.

MSRP \$449

Web www.Smith-Wesson.com





7 *Ruger LC9s/LC380*

These two striker fire semi-autos are only slightly larger than the barely-there LCP, yet their larger size helps mitigate recoil and they boast higher capacities and more grip space for big hands.

Both guns have alloy steel slides and polymer frames, and they have been designed without sharp edges that tend to hang-up on clothing when the gun is being drawn. The glass-filled nylon grips are sleek and very comfortable, and they help manage the recoil from heavy defensive loads during long shooting sessions at the range.

The dovetail front and rear sights are adjustable and these guns come with integrated trigger and manual safeties, an internal striker block and a magazine disconnect. These guns are compact (both models are 6 inches long, weigh 17 ounces and are just .90 inches wide) yet they have the feel of a full-sized gun on the range.

MSRP \$449

Web www.Ruger.com

8 *Taurus Concealed Carry Revolvers*

Taurus offers a host of revolvers for concealed carry, including the 605, 650, 617, 850 and others, and they are all great choices for anyone looking for a compact wheelgun for personal defense.

These guns are available in .38 Special +P or .357 Magnum, and there a wide variety of different options, including exposed and internal hammers, blued or stainless finish and even a polymer-frame .357 Magnum revolver that weighs just under 20 ounces. The 850B2UL is a great choice for most concealed carry applications; its sleek design lacks an exposed hammer, it features soft, comfortable rubber grips with stipple texturing, and a 5-shot, .38 Special +P capacity.

The 850B2UL has very basic sights with a gutter rear and post front, pretty much standard on compact carry revolvers, and these guns are a reliable, easy-to-use option for carry or police backup.

MSRP \$431.82 (for the 850B2UL)

Web www.TaurusUSA.com





9 CZ P-07/P-09

First of all, an admission — the P-07 has an MSRP of \$510, the P-09 \$530. That puts them slightly out of range, but street prices will be below the \$500 mark and you shouldn't overlook guns this good because of 10 bucks.

The P-07 and the P-09 are the two members of CZ's Omega polymer family, with the 07 being the compact version while the 09 is a full-sized gun. Functionally, the two guns are the same, both of them SA/DA hammer-fired semi-autos that are chambered in either 9mm or .40 S&W.

One of the coolest features on these guns is their interchangeable decocker/manual safety design, which allows you to select whether the system functions as a decocker or a safety. It's also ambidextrous, so this gun works equally well for right- and left-handed shooters. This gun's slide rides inside the frame rails, a design that CZ pioneered, and this allows for a low bore axis and less muzzle rise.

The Omega trigger is among the very best you will find on any semi-auto, both in single action and double-action mode. The P-07 is slightly smaller than the P-09, and the former is a better choice for concealed carry, but both of these guns are too good to ignore.

MSRP \$510 (P-07) and **\$530** (P-09)

Web www.CZ-USA.com



10 *Walther PPX*

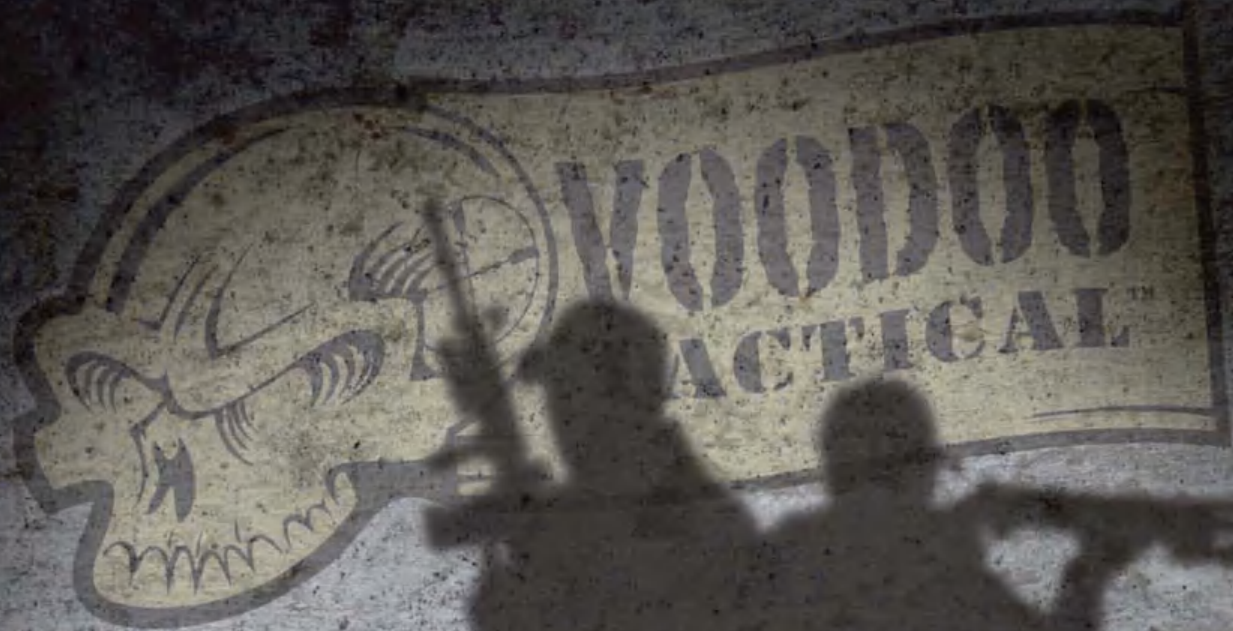
Walther gets another place on the list with the PPX.

Unlike the sleek, compact CCP, the PPX is truly a full-sized semi-auto, and it's pushing the upper limit of concealed carry, but it's a fine handgun that is loaded with a long list of features that includes a hammer-fired action and smooth trigger, low-profile combat sights, an ambidextrous magazine release button, Picatinny rail, Tenifer slide, easy-to-use takedown lever and that fantastic Walther grip. The grip angle may leave you scratching your head initially, but shoot this gun just once, and you'll be nodding with approval.

The gun handles recoil well and allows for fast follow-ups, and with a 16-round capacity in 9mm (14 in .40 S&W) you've got a lot of opportunities for follow-ups. Everything about this gun is robust and durable, and it was engineered and built to survive that rigorous 10,000-round torture test.

MSRP \$449

Web www.WaltherArms.com 



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DNA FOR **GREATNESS**

*Walther's CCP 9mm Hits the Mark With a Number of Features,
Including Reliability, Accuracy and Fast Follow-Up Shots*

BY BRAD FITZPATRICK



The growing tide of concealed carry permit holders has prompted handgun companies to offer new lines of compact revolver or semi-autos aimed directly at the CCW crowd.

Ruger had plenty of experience designing handguns and, as the CCW craze started, used that accumulated knowledge to create smaller and more concealable handguns like the highly popular LCP semi-auto and LCR revolver. Smith & Wesson already offered their J-Frame wheelguns, but the addition of smaller models like the Bodyguard bolstered the already-popular brand's appeal with a new generation of shooters, many of whom had never owned a gun before.

A few companies like SCCY emerged on the firearms scene at the height of the compact handgun

buying craze, and their CPX semi-autos won over new shooters with their robust design and budget prices.

Interested buyers were busy debating which concealed carry gun was best in gun shops and online forums across the nation. And with the number of new shooters looking for the perfect carry gun, no company wanted to be left behind, including Walther Arms.

ACCURACY: WALTHER CCP 9MM

Load	Grains	Average Group (inches)	Smallest Group (inches)	Muzzle Velocity (fps, 12 feet from muzzle)
Nosler Defense	124	1.18	1.06	1,021
Hornady Critical Duty	135	1.25	1.16	928
Winchester W JHP Train & Defend	147	1.36	1.29	902

FOR MORE INFO

www.Nosler.com
107 SW Columbia St
Bend, Oregon, USA 97702
(800) 285-3701



The CCP was designed specifically for concealed carry, and it has a number of carry-friendly features like rounded slide edges, a comfortable grip, and minimized controls that won't hang on your clothing.

NOSLER'S NEW DEFENSE AMMUNITION

Nosler may be best known for their big-game bullets, but the company is now offering their own brand of self-defense ammunition that is loaded with the best components.

Available in 9mm+P, .40 S&W and .45 ACP +P, the Defense line of ammunition is loaded with either a jacketed hollow-point bullet or the company's new tipped hollow point, which has a polymer tip inserted into the open nose cavity of the bullet for a more aerodynamic profile and greater penetration.

Both the standard and tipped bullets are bonded for maximum reliability. Having the jacket bonded to the core of the bullet eliminates the chances of bullet separation and insures that the bullet will maintain maximum weight, a critical consideration when selecting a defensive load. The team at Nosler obviously knows a thing or two about reloading, and this experience has allowed their engineers to develop the right brass/primer/propellant/projectile combinations for maximum speed, accuracy, penetration and energy transfer.

In addition, each round is visually inspected to insure that it is up to Nosler's strict standards. If you're a reloader, you'll appreciate the high-quality brass that's left over after shooting a box of Nosler Defense.

WALTHER'S ROLE

Based in Ulm, Germany, Walther Arms, had a compact carry gun with a production record that long preceded the CCW movement of the early 2000s. Known as the PPK, it was carried by notable fictitious characters (James Bond, primarily) and real-life celebrities like Elvis Presley, and had considerable cache and mass appeal.

The PPK was not without its problems, though, the primary one being that the gun was designed in the 1930s and, as such, relied on machining techniques that made it rather expensive for new shooters.

In 2009, Walther, which had partnered with Smith & Wesson, released the PK380, a modernized compact .380 semi-auto with a polymer frame and exposed hammer. It was well received by the U.S. market, but many American shooters favored more compact striker-fire designs and some shooters felt the .380 wasn't sufficient for defensive purposes. When the Ulm-based company turned out the full-size PPX in 2013, it seems that Walther had offered up all the concealed carry guns that the brand would offer. That didn't turn out to be the case.

SECRETS REVEALED

In August, 2013, I was part of a group of gun writers that was invited to Ulm to view a secret project that Walther had been working on for some time.



The CCP's manual safety will, at least in general design, seem familiar to anyone who has carried a 1911. The lever moves up for SAFE, and when the gun is drawn it can be dropped to the FIRE position effortlessly.

That secret project, it turned out, was a brand new, thoroughly modern concealed carry pistol known as the CCP.

It was a totally new design for Walther — a 9mm fixed-barrel gas-operated pistol. Upon firing, gases escape from a vent just in front of the chamber. As the gas escapes, rearward movement of the slide is slowed almost imperceptibly, which serves to reduce the impact of felt recoil and allows the shooter to get back on target more quickly.

Additionally, there's a piston located underneath the barrel that also works to slow that rearward motion and to keep the gun planted nose-down for the fastest follow-up shots of any handgun in the category. Walther calls this unique design the SOFTCOIL system, and it's aptly named. Aided by an excellent trigger with a short reset, the CCP allows you to deliver the kind of clap-clap double taps that make firearms instruc-

tors smile. From a more practical standpoint, the CCP delivers full-power 9mm loads with .380-level recoil. That is a very good thing for new shooters who are oftentimes adverse to recoil. But regardless of your skillset, the ability to deliver very fast follow-ups is a boon for anyone who's carrying a concealed handgun.

The CCP's gas-operated design and additional piston serve to slow the rearward motion of the gun's steel slide, and that helps improve longevity. Gun companies know that the fast, hard, strike of a slide moving during the shot can shorten the usable life of a firearm. To remedy this, many companies resist the slide's rearward movement by installing a heavy spring that reduces the effects of the slide slamming backward. While these heavy springs help extend the life of the firearm, they do very little to make the shooting experience more pleasant because they require

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HOW TO REACH THEM

www.WaltherArms.com
Walther Arms, Inc.
7700 Chad Colley Blvd
Fort Smith, AR 72916
(479) 242-8500



The CCP has drift-adjustable rear sights that are dovetailed into the slide and interchangeable front sights. These front blades are the same used in other Walther guns, including the popular P99.

strong hands and a lot of force to cycle the action.

If you have much experience with semi-autos you've run into at least a few that have ultra-heavy springs, the guns that you cycle with great effort and no shortage of twisted facial expressions and then take a quick glance around the gun shop to insure that no one witnessed your mighty struggle. The CCP's gas system and piston allow you to manipulate the slide with ease, usually with two fingers and a noticeable absence of facial contortions.

Producing a gun with Waltheresque reliability ratings that was so easy to manipulate was a tough project. Walther demands that all models pass a strict 10,000-round torture test and elevated drop testing, but the CCP passed. That translates into a user-friendly gun with the tough-as-nails reputation that serious shooters and MI6 agents demand. But designing a semi-auto with a one-of-a-kind operating system like the CCP took time, and Walther didn't want to rush to market.

Their goal was to produce the very best concealed carry pistol they could, and beating other companies

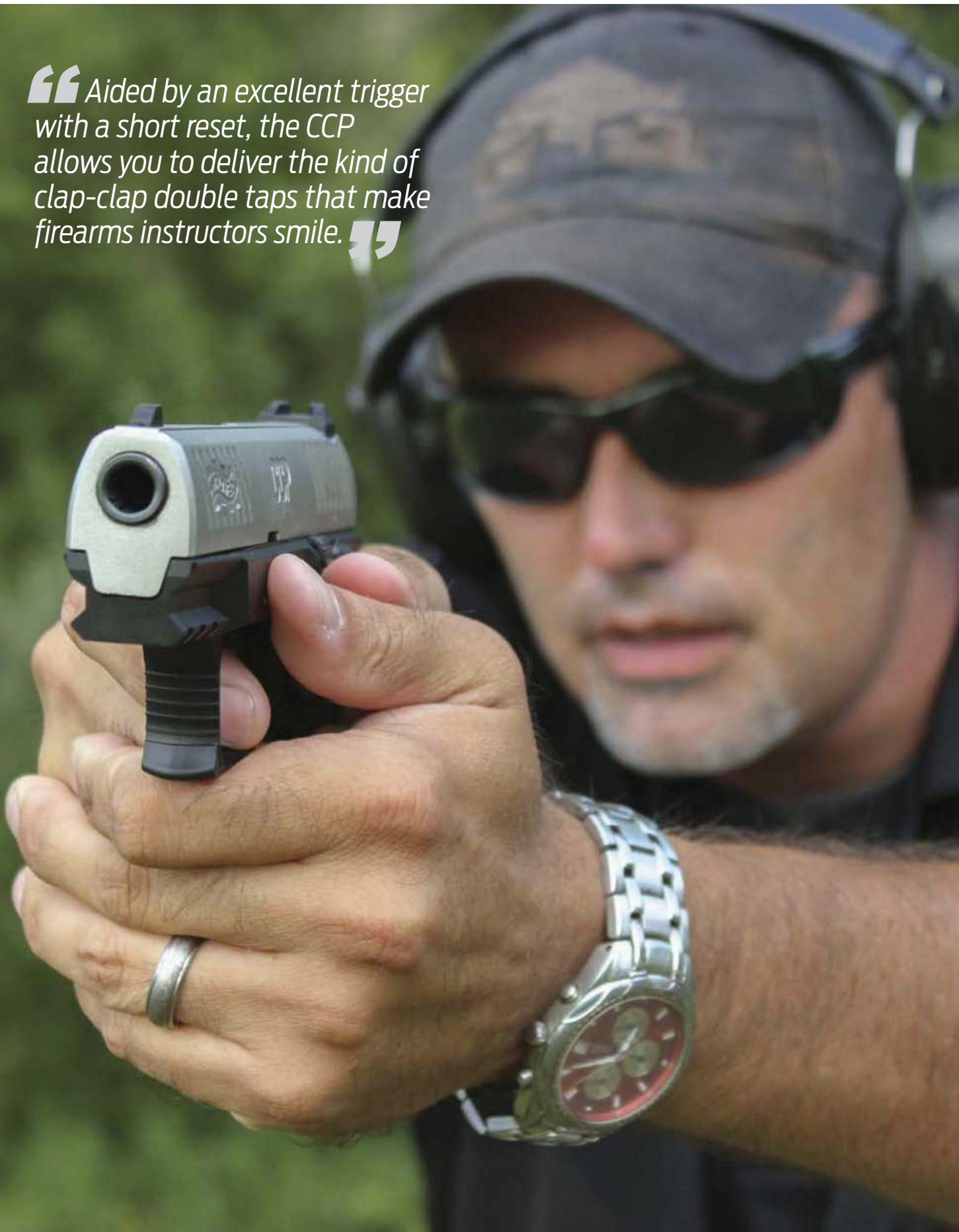
to the punch meant cutting corners. Walther was unwilling to do that, and they took the time they needed to build a handgun worthy of the brand's name. That gun was the CCP.

BLUEPRINT FOR SUCCESS

On paper, the blueprint of the action and the overall design schematic seemed to contain the DNA for a great concealed carry pistol. But Walther had to make the CCP fit well in the hand and easy to conceal. These two qualities aren't mutually exclusive, but most gun company engineers that have tried to balance these qualities into one gun can tell you what a struggle it can be. Too big and you have a gun that's blocky and doesn't fit well in a concealed carry holster. Guns that are too small will leave shooters with big hands hanging their pinky fingers in mid-air, and they're not as accurate as their larger counterparts.

Walther rides the functional-but-compact line very well; the CCP is just 6.41 inches long with its 3.54-inch barrel, and unloaded it weighs

“Aided by an excellent trigger with a short reset, the CCP allows you to deliver the kind of clap-clap double taps that make firearms instructors smile.”



“This is an easy gun to grip properly, hold comfortably, and shoot quickly and accurately. It deserves high scores and leaves very little to complain about.”



The Walther CCP's controls are easy to find and use, but they are small enough not to be intrusive when drawing the gun from a holster. There's a slide stop and a manual safety, and the ambidextrous magazine release button is located just behind the trigger guard.

just 22.4 ounces. It's 1.18 inches wide, and even though there are competitors that measure less than an inch from right to left, that additional .18 inches makes a world of difference with regard to comfort.

The rear of the grip is rounded at the bottom and curves forward just below the slide to promote a high-handed grip (which in turn, aids in delivering fast follow-ups because having your hand in the proper position further mitigates recoil). The grip is rounded and comfortable with cross-directional texturing that is secure in the hand, but not so aggressive as to be irritating. There are minimal controls to get in the way of firing — on the left side of the gun you'll find a slide lock, a manual safety, and an ambidextrous magazine release, and all of these controls are minimized and mated to the contours of the gun. That means no hangups when you draw, and intuitive control placement makes this an easy gun to shoot quickly.

In addition, the edges of the CNC-machined steel slide are rounded for a smooth, easy, snag-free draw. The sole option when purchasing the CCP is whether you prefer the Cerakote black slide or the stainless look. Both guns come with a single-stack 8-round magazine.

Many companies don't spend a lot of time adding accuracy-enhancing features to their compact concealable semi-autos. After all, these guns are made for stopping an immediate threat at close range, not scoring well in a 3-gun match. Nevertheless, Walther wanted to make the CCP an accurate gun that you could shoot quickly. The 5.5-pound trigger is smooth, and trigger travel is very short at .27 inches. The CCP's barrel is affixed to the frame and this provides a stable platform that enhances accuracy. The sights, too, are some of the very best in this category — a drift-adjustable rear that is dovetailed to the slide mated to a front blade that is removable and replaceable (three front sights provided).

It's nice that a gun of this size and with an obvious slant toward concealment has an adjustable rear sight, and the trio of interchangeable fronts is a real bonus. The three-dot design is easy to use, and the accessory rail leaves enough space for a light, laser or other items that you may need on your defensive firearm.

As previously stated, the dimensions of this gun are very good. It's compact, yes, but it's easy to shoot comfortably (thanks in large part to one of the greatest grips in all of gundom) and the mild recoil allows you to shoot quickly and accurately. But how does the gun perform on the range? Quite well, in fact.

ON THE RANGE

At the range, I tested the CCP with three different brands of ammunition — Nosler's new Defense loads, Hornady's Critical Duty 135 grain loads, and Winchester's W Train & Defend ammunition (the 147 Defend load).


The gas system did just fine with all three loads, chambering, firing, extracting and ejecting with authority and ease. There were no hangups or jams throughout the testing process. The gun performed well every time and did so with less felt recoil than you'd expect from a 9mm of this size. Double taps are easy, the gun points naturally, and the controls are intuitive.

At 15 yards the Nosler Defense produced groups that averaged 1.18 inches wide. The Hornady ammunition averaged just over 1.25 inches, and the Winchester loads produced 1.36 inch average groups. That's very good accuracy for a short-barreled handgun, but this is a defensive pistol and the odds aren't very good that you'll be firing at 15 yards or from a fixed rest. Accuracy was excellent, but handling is even better. This is an easy gun to grip properly, hold comfortably, and shoot quickly and accurately. It deserves high scores and leaves very little to complain about. It's a carry gun that doesn't cut corners.

BOND APPROVED

Taking the time to develop the CCP exactly as they wanted it has allowed Walther to learn from the mistakes of other companies and to build a handgun that met their own standards without the push to get it out the door ahead of a competing model.

Additionally, this has given Walther time to get plenty of guns in the hands of U.S. dealers, which means a better chance of getting the guns in the hands of consumers very quickly. That's good, because you'll want this gun, especially considering that it carries an MSRP of just \$449.

Maybe Walther isn't really late to the concealed carry 9mm game. Perhaps, instead, they were waiting for our palettes to get a bit more defined, for consumers to try out the other guns before settling on the high-class German import. I think Ian Fleming would have approved. 

7 STRONG POINTS

- 1 Functional but compact
- 2 Fast follow-ups
- 3 Minimal controls to get in the way of firing
- 4 An easy gun to shoot quickly
- 5 Easy, snag-free draw
- 6 Smooth trigger
- 7 Stable platform that enhances accuracy

REVIEW



A TALE OF **TWO HOLSTERS**

*A Reliable Two-Holster Combo from Safariland
That Is Suited for Concealing the 1911*

BY STEVE SIEBERTS

It's a close call.

One of the best aspects about building or acquiring a new handgun, especially a new custom handgun, is, of course, shooting it. But what's a close second? Figuring out what type of holster to use with it.

Some handguns will dictate the type of holster you are steered toward, depending on the type of gun you are getting. For example, if I'm getting a new J-frame revolver or a pocket auto, I'm probably putting it in an ankle holster or some other type of

deep concealment holster. If I normally carry in the summertime, I would probably get some type of inside the waistband (IWB) holster because I'm most likely only wearing a light t-shirt outside, or at least some type of slim and unobtrusive OWB belt holster.

For this review, I went with two holsters, since this pistol will be performing dual roles. Two holsters makes it nice since I can tailor the holster for the job, rather than trying to make a single holster do everything.

I put them to the test, and this is what I found.

[HOLSTER 1]

SAFARILAND

MODEL 6378 ALS

So I decided to first try the Safariland model 6378 ALS®.

This is an open top paddle-type holster made from Safarilaminate construction. The 6378 is not a true straight-drop holster, having a slight forward cant. The holster comes with the patented ALS retention system. This is Safariland's Automatic Locking System, and is a very simple but effective way to retain the holster when carrying, but allows an instant draw.

The retention latch works via a pivoting bar on the inside of the holster. The bar is actually held down onto the ejection port by spring tension. When the shooter acquires the proper grip, he simply pushes down on the latch about 3/8ths of an inch, and the bar rises up off the ejection port and releases the pistol. When I say push down, the shooter is actually pushing the latch down toward the bottom of the grip, not down toward the muzzle (see photo). It's a very natural motion, and happens instantly. By pushing the gun back into the holster, the bar snaps back into place onto the ejection port, retaining the gun. It's a very clever, simple and effective way to build a good retention type holster.

It also makes a very good holster for IDPA matches, and in a pinch, I would probably use this holster for IPSC and 3-gun matches as well. The downside to this holster is that with the paddle, it can be a little bulky compared to a more minimalist design.

Another great feature about the 6387 is the SafariSuede® internal lining. I've had several shooters tell me that they've had this SafariSuede lining in their holsters for years and have not had scratches or wear marks on the gun. The Cerakote finish is durable and you want the finish to last.



The Safariland 6378 ALS is a great combination holster for concealed carry as well as competitions like IPSC and IDPA.

“I’ve had several shooters tell me that they’ve had this SafariSuede lining in their holsters for years and have not had scratches or wear marks on the gun.”



The Safariland Model 105 belt holster is a well-designed holster for those that like a small signature holster. It's sturdy enough to keep the large-framed auto like the custom Caspian 1911 secured without wobble.

[HOLSTER 2]

SAFARILAND

BIANCHI MODEL 105

The other holster used for this gun is the suede-lined Bianchi Model 105, also from Safariland.

It's a minimalist belt slide holster that is designed for ultimate concealment in an OWB type holster. The holster comes in black or brown, and has two belt loops that tend to pull the holster close to the body. The holster is comfortable to wear, and has a loop retainer tab to help retain the gun, but honestly, the gun fits so well in the holster that I don't see the need for the loop.

The one criticism of the holster would be the lack of some kind of sight track. The front sight on my Project 1911 is undercut, and the main fear with any open muzzle design is the front sight hanging up on the holster during the critical moment. Safariland, are you listening? A small plastic, molded-in sight track with a funneled opening at the bottom wouldn't add very much to the holster's production cost and would help ensure that the front sight on any gun will not hang up when drawing the pistol.

NICE MIX FOR THE 1911

All in all, the two holsters in this review add up to a nice mix for a 1911 type handgun that will be used in many roles.

The paddle holster is a good choice in the winter months with the heavier clothing and for use in competitive events like IDPA, and the belt slide holster is a good choice in the summer when the uniform of the day is usually just a t-shirt and shorts.

I really like the 6378, and will probably be wearing this one during some of the IDPA matches at my local range with the Project 1911.

CONTACT INFO

WEB www.SafariLand.com

PHONE (800) 347-1200



The inside of the Safariland ALS holster shows the SafariSuede lining, offering excellent protection for the finest gun finish.

The Safariland ALS paddle holster, when paired with the custom Caspian Arms 1911 pistol and quality Black Hills +P ammunition, makes a very potent carry ensemble.



LIKES

1 MODEL 6378 ALS

- Internal lining protects gun
- Automatic Locking System creates a simple, effective way to retain the holster, plus, it allows an instant draw

2 MODEL Bianchi 105

- Two belt loops pull the holster close to the body
- Comfortable
- Loop retainer tab helps retain the gun



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The Bianchi Model 105 is a minimalist belt slide holster that provides a small profile for OWB carry. The holster and gun is easily covered by the Blackhawk! Lightweight Tactical Shirt.

“All in all, the two holsters in this review add up to a nice mix for a 1911 type handgun that will be used in many roles.”

TAKE IT EASY

PATIENCE IS A VIRTUE WHEN BUYING A HOLSTER

The choice of a holster is a uniquely personal one and shouldn't be taken lightly. I think that many times the holster is an afterthought, and that people should take as much time, or more, selecting a holster as they do selecting the ammunition used in the gun or even selecting the gun itself.

With the sheer number of holster manufacturers and holster types and styles out there, a shooter has more of a selection of outstanding holsters now than ever before. I've used Safariland holsters since the mid-70s and have always been impressed by the quality and engineering of their products. The Safariland family of holsters should be on the very short list for any shooter today.



The paddle on the Safariland ALS holster is molded to provide a very close, and comfortable fit against the body, making it a good choice for a gun/holster combination meant to be carried all day.



The ALS holster features the thumb release, which is fast and easy to manipulate, even with gloves. The holster has excellent retention characteristics and is a great choice for concealed carry. [CC](#)

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SPECIFICATIONS - H & K

Manufacturer: Heckler & Koch

Model: P30SK (Subcompact)

Caliber: 9mm

Capacity: 10+1

Barrel: 3.27 inches

Width: 1.37 inches

Height: 4.57 inches

Weight: 23.99 oz



STREET MATH

10 + 1 = H&K'S COMPACT P30SK

BY DAVE WORKMAN

Legally-licensed private citizens — and there are somewhere around 12 million of us — who like the 9mm for concealed carry are going to love the rugged little subcompact P30SK semi-auto from Heckler & Koch.

Having had the opportunity to feed a decent selection of JHP and FMJ ammunition through this DA/SA pistol — one of two configurations available, the other being an LEM DOA version — I can attest to a couple of things. It is reliable, and at gunfighting ranges, remarkably accurate depending upon the particular load and one's ability to hold steady on target.

Let's look at it even closer.

FIRST LOOK

Hitting the scale at an acceptable 23.99 ounces (empty), H&K supplies this sidearm, which is definitely designed for personal protection on the street, with two 10-round magazines. That gives the P30SK 10-plus-1 firepower, and in a gunfight, that's the kind of math that often makes the difference between, shall we say, "pass/fail."

After getting my hands on this handsomely plain-looking pistol (serious street guns are often rather plain-looking with a durable finish, textured or checkered gripping surface and high-visibility sights), I was immediately impressed at its size. It's not overly thick at 1.37 inches at its widest point, and it's less than 6 ½ inches overall. Anybody who can't hide this pistol summer or winter isn't trying very hard.

My guess is that decent holsters are, or soon will be, available from N82, High Noon,

Mitch Rosen, Greg Kramer, DeSantis and every other company on the map. I suspect as the word spreads about the P30SK, they'll be getting a fair amount of business.

HOW IT ROCKS

So, what about this gun is it that makes it rock? Oh, where to begin? We've already touched on its payload, caliber, weight and overall length.

First off, H&K designed this pistol with a polymer frame that can be tailored to individual shooters. The grip dimension can be changed out by swapping side panels and mainspring housings, a process that takes a couple of minutes, a punch and a bit of gentle tapping with a plastic mallet.

Out of the box, the fat grip panels were installed, and after handling the pistol for about a minute, I decided to install the thinnest of three sets of panels. There, that felt better!

All of these panels are textured, for a firm hold even in wet weather. Here in the Pacific Northwest, down on the Gulf Coast, in the Great Lakes or along the Eastern Seaboard that can come in handy, as anyone who lives in those environs will attest, especially in the wet winter or the sweaty/humid summer.

Incidentally, for a real thorough cleaning after you've gone through several hundred rounds, popping off the rear mainspring cover panel and shooting a few blasts of solvent followed by a drop or two of oil will keep the crud from accumulating around that coiled spring.

It has ambidextrous controls for the



magazine release and slide release. While my test gun did not have an ambidextrous thumb safety, one is available, according to H&K literature, and I heartily recommend that feature on any pistol. It forces people to think about safety.

At the rear of the slide, there's a thumb decocker, just left of the hammer. This took some getting used to for me, as I'm accustomed to the thumb safety on my personal carry gun, and I've also had more experience with decockers located on the side of the slide or the frame. It's not unsafe; quite the opposite, in fact. I tried it several times at the range with live

rounds in the chamber, and it never once failed. It's just different.

Disassembly is simple. After removing the magazine and checking the chamber, push the slide back, press the slide release pin from right to left until a red stripe appears on the top-left surface, and then run the slide forward and off the rails. The recoil spring comes out easily, followed by the barrel and voilà! You're ready to scrub, spray, brush, wipe and lubricate in a jiffy.

I'm happy to say I got everything right the first time.

“That gives the P30SK 10-plus-1 firepower, and in a gunfight, that’s the kind of math that often makes the difference between, shall we say, ‘pass/fail.’”

AND THERE’S MORE TO LIKE

Even on this subcompact pistol, H&K added a molded accessory rail on the front of the frame in front of the trigger guard. I’ve never been keen on accessory lights or lasers, but a lot of people love them, and swear by them. The rail is a feature that today’s generation of shooters has come to expect, so it needs to be there.

The three-dot sights are adjustable for windage — and according to the manual, for elevation — by replacing the front sight. My test pistol shot a bit low so if I’d bought it, the front sight would have been replaced. On the plus side, my groups were nice and tight within 25 yards. (At the range, I cranked off a couple of rounds at some chunks of broken clay targets and struck just under them in the sandy berm; not bad for a gun I’d never fired before!)



There's an accessory rail molded into the front of the polymer frame for lights or lasers.

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5 KEY FEATURES THE AUTHOR LIKES THE P30SK

- 1 It is tight
- 2 Easily maintained
- 3 Accurate
- 4 Chambered for a serious caliber
- 5 Small enough to be carried without a holster



One can tailor the pistol to his or her hand by simply swapping out grip components. It comes with two spare sets of side panels and backstraps.

There is something important to note about those sights. The dots are made with some luminous material. Hit it with a flashlight for about ten seconds and in a dark room, they show up like beacons. I happen to like that setup because gun-fights are never guaranteed to occur at noon on a sunny day. They frequently happen under less than ideal conditions, and never on a pre-arranged schedule!

The front strap on the molded grip featured textured finger grooves. I don't really care for such grooves, but others do, and they do tend to place this short-framed pistol in its proper position in the hand. I also noticed that during recoil, my grip didn't shift noticeably between shots.

A PASSING SCORE

For my range testing, I used ammunition from Black Hills, Federal, Remington and Sig Sauer, and never got a failure to feed or eject. The P30SK's ejection port is lowered,

“At a suggested price of less than \$725, my guess is that the subcompact P30SK will quickly garner a sizeable following.”

and amply wide for ejecting spent cases wide and to the right rear.

The P30SK's slide is made from high carbon steel and coated with what the company calls a “corrosion resistant nitro-carburized finish.” I'm not sure what that translates to in plain English, but suffice to say it is a non-glare, matte appearance and looks to be tough as nails. There are cocking serrations front and rear, though I've never been able to figure out why front serrations might be necessary on such a small pistol.

H&K designed this pistol with an external extractor that doubles as a loaded chamber indicator. That's another expected feature on many of today's defensive pistols, and the extractor on the P30SK is beefy enough that I doubt it could ever fail.

AN ATTRACTIVE PRICE

At a suggested price of less than \$725, my guess is that the subcompact P30SK will quickly garner a sizeable following. Clearly designed to take a leading position in the subcompact defensive pistol market, it is tight, easily maintained, accurate, chambered for a serious caliber — thanks especially to the development of new ammunition and modern bullet designs — and small enough that it can be carried in the pocket of a parka, winter coat or vest without a holster.

In an emergency, it'll do...and then some! ☑

THE BOTTOM LINE

MSRP: \$719



PHOTO BY DAVE WORKMAN



H&K supplies this gun with three-dot sights that glow in the dark.



Recoil is a consideration, but this shooter, trained at home and by the Army, has no difficulty with the .45.

SUPER **SIX!**

Quality .45 ACP Defense Loads

STORY AND PHOTOS BY BOB CAMPBELL

The .45 ACP is among the most respected of modern service cartridges. While the primary reason the .45 ACP is chosen for personal defense is wound potential, there are compelling reasons for choosing this cartridge other than the obvious. They are as follows:

- The .45 ACP operates at relatively modest pressures of 18,900 to 21,000 PSI for the popular defense loads. This results in low weapons wear.
- The .45 ACP is well-balanced and often delivers excellent accuracy, even right out of the box, although most guns benefit in the accuracy department with some custom tuning.
- The relatively small charge of fast burning powder demonstrates a full powder burn even in short barrels. An advantage of this full powder burn is



The Black Hills 185 grain TAC +P offers excellent cartridge integrity.

Cartridge integrity case mouth seal and primer seal are vital to reliable function.

reduced muzzle signature — usually just a few sparks or a warm orange glow.

(For those looking for a little history, see the sidebar.)

The 230 grain “Hardball” loading of the standard .45 ACP load often produces more total wound volume due the length of wound channel and a large exit wound compared to hollow-point bullets. Shock is simply the deprivation of oxygen by the brain and cannot be counted on unless blood loss is present.

Only actual damage means anything in wound ballistics. JHP bullets offer increased wound potential and are demanded for public safety to limit penetration and ricochet. When the proper balance of expansion and penetration are present, the .45 ACP offers excellent wound potential.

With any handgun cartridge designed for personal defense, the first criterion is reliability. With an overall length of 1.25 inches, the cartridge should feed properly in most factory firearms. The bullet must penetrate a minimum of 12 inches in calibrated ballistic gelatin and expand to 1.5 times its original

diameter. The following loads meet those criteria:

NO. 1&2: Black Hills Ammunition 230 grain and 185 grain JHP

The Black Hills Ammunition 230 grain JHP offers an ideal balance of expansion and penetration. The load breaks 850 fps from my Colt Commander and 830 fps from the SIG P 220 Carry Elite. I do not choose my carry load based on any criteria save the worst case scenario. The penetration of this load is ideal for critical use. I prefer the momentum and penetration of the 230 grain JHP, however, the BHA 185 grain TAC +P load has given me pause. Launching at 1,000 fps from the Colt Commander, this load, using the Barnes all copper JHP, offers excellent expansion, reasonable recoil, and if it matters, shoots flat to 50 yards. I like this load more each time I fire it.

This load has excellent penetration qualities and 185 grain is loaded to +P velocities and pressures.



The Hornady American Gunner loads are both affordable and reliable.

“With any handgun cartridge designed for personal defense, the first criterion is reliability.”

A GUIDE FOR YOUR NEEDS

As with any discussion of ammunition, the results noted should be used as a guide in determining what's best for your particular handgun and defensive needs. Choosing a good handgun load can be difficult because there are so many excellent choices available from so many manufacturers, and sometimes half of the enjoyment we get as handgun shooters is going out to the range and testing different loads and manufacturers' offerings to determine which one is the best choice for our gun and shooting style.

NO. 3&4: Hornady Manufacturing 185 and 200 grain JHP

The Hornady American Gunner 185 grain JHP offers modest recoil and excellent accuracy. Velocity is consistent with a 970 fps velocity — but the load isn't rated +P. The balance of expansion and penetration is good. I have used a modest quantity of this new offering and find it good.

Hornady has toed the line on increasing prices and I appreciate that. My personal favorite Hornady loading is the 200 grain XTP. This load is a favorite of armed professionals for many reasons. The balance of expansion and penetration is ideal with 15 inches average penetration and expansion to .66 caliber at an average 911 fps from the Commander. (Expect more from the 5-inch guns.) Coupled with match grade accuracy the Hornady 200 grain XTP is a good choice.

The Hornady ammunition is probably the most accurate of them all, and also possesses a good balance of expansion and penetration.

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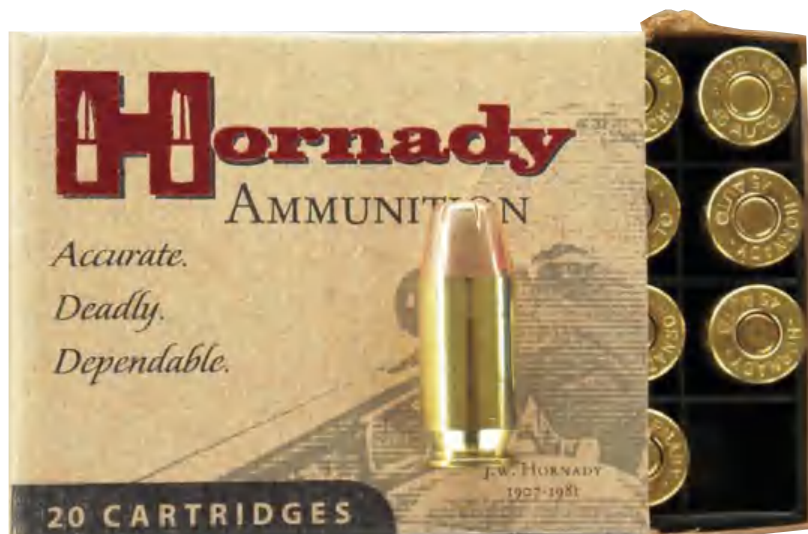
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The Hornady 200 grain XTP holds a special place in the author's respect.

“...the primary reason the .45 ACP is chosen for personal defense is wound potential...”



Winchester's 230 grain PDX load has seen considerable Federal service with excellent results.

NO 5&6: Winchester JHP and 230 grain PDX

During the First World War, Winchester met a reliability standard of one primer failure of 1 in 100,000, unheard of in the day. Today they are world leaders in reliable ammunition. A recent offering with much merit is the W1911 line of .45 ACP loads. They are useful in any .45 ACP pistol but clearly useful in the popular 1911 handgun. The W1911 line includes a training load and a JHP load. The JHP loading has much in common with the Silvertip design. This is an ideal loading for personal defense and home defense.

Expansion is rapid as may be



Winchester's PDX load have a century or more of development behind them. Cartridge integrity is vital.



Winchester's FMJ W1911 load strikes to the same point of aim as the JHP load, making it a great practice load. It is good to have an understudy for the carry load.



When a loading features the proper overall length and good design, it will feed in even World War Two 1911A1 pistols

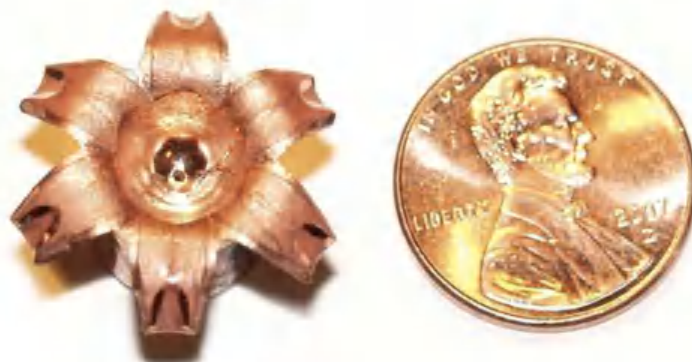
.45 ACP 101

Those who choose the .45 ACP based on wound potential have made a wise choice, but the whole package is a good one. The original loading used a 230 grain jacketed bullet, and despite attempts at revisionist history, the .45 ACP proved very effective in combat and personal defense worldwide with this loading. That's no surprise; the cartridge was developed by experienced experts in the field.

Among these specialists were Colonel John Thompson and Major (Dr.) Louis LaGarde. The .45 ACP was the product of direct action experience against aboriginal warriors across the globe. Actual experience in the Philippines as well as the "banana wars" in South America was compelling; the small bores that were in use of the day, did not do the job and cost good men their lives.

While the .45 ACP cartridge was designed to be as effective as possible in common with the .45 Colt revolver cartridges, Colonel Thompson noted that no cartridge is infallible. Unless you arm each soldier with a 75mm field piece, there is no guarantee of stopping an assailant, he concluded, but accurate rapid fire with a big bore self loader was the best prescription available. The same is true today.

It is an important consideration that the .45 ACP was designed to be effective in dropping not only an enemy war horse, but tigers and other large animals encountered by the Army. I give historical reports by the US Army far more credence than so-called studies that include unverifiable secret sources and unrepeatable testing with a validity of zero. Professional testing is repeatable and verifiable.



Note the excellent expansion of the Black Hills 185 grain TAC load.



Winchester M1911 loads are available in both practice and defense loadings at an attractive price.



“It is an important consideration that the .45 ACP was designed to be effective in dropping not only an enemy war horse, but tigers and other large animals encountered by the Army.”


Firing off hand in rapid fire, each load proved reliable in the Colt Commander .45.

expected from a load breaking 860 fps. The W1911 loads are offered in economical 50-round boxes. For 98% of the situations we are likely to encounter, this load is ideal. The 230 grain PDX is a bonded core design that meets or exceeds FBI criteria for penetration of wallboard, vehicle sheet metal and auto glass. This load isn't in +P territory but it is plenty fast at 855 fps from the Commander. Accuracy is good and function excellent. For those that wish to hedge their bets for the worst case scenario, this load is proven in Federal service.

These loads use a bonded core bullet design, which can give slightly better penetration qualities. Delivers reliable expansion without +P velocities.

RELIABILITY COUNTS

I have fired these loads for accuracy and found each demonstrate good-to-excellent accuracy. More importantly, they have given good function when fired from the retention position, with the weak hand, and from offhand firing positions.

Reliability is a million times more important than any other criteria. These loads also offer excellent wound potential. While the single greatest predictor of survival remains prior training, these are good loads that will serve well. You pay your money and take your choice. 



We clocked each load. These are powerful loads well suited for personal defense.



Black Hills Ammunition offers a conventional JHP (left), and the modern all copper JHP (right). Each offers good performance.

STAY IN THE **FIGHT**

How to Prevent and Clear Malfunctions

STORY AND PHOTOS BY BOB CAMPBELL



If you are ever caught in a personal defense situation and your handgun malfunctions, you are toast if you don't have the proper skills to get the pistol back up and running.

And malfunctions do happen.

Handgun maintenance is essential to prevent malfunctions, and regular cleaning and proper lubrication are important to ensuring the handgun functions properly.

But malfunctions may occur with the best maintained handgun. The problem may be shooter related, ammunition related or a magazine problem. The shooter may have allowed his thumb to ride against the slide or bumped the slide lock during the firing cycle, or the magazine may have failed at a critical moment. The shooter may be using the latest bargain-basement load or a non-standard bullet weight the pistol wasn't designed to handle. True jams are rare but stop-pages are not.

There are different types of malfunctions, and you must be able to clear them. Staring at the handgun and shaking it will accomplish nothing. Neither will 10-thumbed handling.

Let's look at clearing common malfunctions of the self-loading handgun.

“Malfunctions in a gunfight are survivable but only if you are prepared.”



Practice setting up a malfunction with the use of dummy cartridges. Never use live ammunition.

1 FAILURE TO FIRE

The hammer or striker falls, but the pistol does not fire. There may not be a cartridge in the chamber. The magazine may not be seated correctly or it may have loosened from the magazine catch and a cartridge failed to feed. The cartridge may be chambered but defective. Here is the clearance drill to solve the problem and get ready to fire.

Keep the handgun in the firing position, or at least the firing grip. Bringing the pistol slightly closer to the body results in greater leverage for working the slide. Keep the trigger finger alongside the frame for safe-

ty. Tap the magazine to be certain it is seated. Next grasp the rear of the slide and rack the slide to the rear, simultaneously turning the handgun at a 90-degree angle so that the cartridge in the chamber is ejected and falls to the ground. Let the slide snap forward. Never maintain control of the slide when loading or otherwise, always let it snap forward. Otherwise you may experience a short cycle.

A cartridge is heavier and longer than a spent case and needs more help clearing the ejection port. Now aim at the target and press the trigger. The handgun should fire.



Be certain the handgun is unloaded before you begin. Practice removing the magazine and locking the slide to the rear, quickly.



This is a common stovepipe malfunction.



The first step in clearing a malfunction is to tap the magazine to seat it home.



The next step is to grasp the slide and rack the slide to the rear.



The malfunction has been cleared in this image.

2 TAP, RACK, BANG, DRILL ONE

When executing this drill on the range, do not always fire. Instead, alternate firing and not firing, and always in control.

In a real-world situation, there is a chance you will suffer a malfunction and not be justified in firing the shot after you have cleared the dud cartridge or loaded the chamber. This is an easy drill to practice. Be certain the handgun is triple checked unloaded and also that the magazine is unloaded. You may use the dummy cartridges offered by several makers and available from Brownells.com.

2a FAILURE TO EJECT DRILL

The handgun doesn't fire. The slide is not locked forward.

Cant the muzzle up and scan for a brass in the ejection port stoppage. Tap the magazine. Whether you have a cartridge case in the port or not, rack the slide and be certain that the brass caught in the ejection port is ejected. Use the back of your hand to sweep the cartridge case out of the ejection port. To practice this drill, simply insert a spent case between the breechface and barrel. Be certain that you rake your fingers over the case causing the malfunction if needed.

AMMUNITION USAGE

RELOADING VS. FACTORY

Ammunition issues are probably the main cause of malfunctions in modern firearms. Factory ammunition is normally very high quality, but reloaded ammunition causes the overwhelming number of malfunctions.

If you reload long enough, you will probably experience all of the malfunctions in this article and more. Squib loads, for example, are virtually unheard of with quality factory ammunition, but occur from time to time with reloaders, especially with novice reloaders.

Keep the reloads only for range use, and never for personal defense. Only use quality, fresh, proven, factory ammunition in your defensive handgun.



You are back up and running when the malfunction has been cleared.

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When clearing a case in the ejection port malfunction, sweep the back of the hand over the offending case.



This is a malfunction caused by shooter error — the support hand thumb locked the slide open. All that was needed was to drop the slide lock to return to action.



Bringing the pistol closer to the body gives greater leverage, especially with a cartridge case stuck in the chamber.

3 A FEEDWAY STOPPAGE

A cartridge is in the chamber and another cartridge has attempted to load and is butted into the chambered cartridge. A spent case may not have been extracted and the following cartridge case has rammed into the spent case. This malfunction is often described as the most difficult to clear, but with practice it may be cleared quickly.

Remove the magazine and lock the slide to the rear. Sometimes there will be a round in the chamber, and the round attempting to feed from the magazine may be hard against it. The cartridge in the chamber may be live or it may be a cartridge case that did not eject. The magazine may be partly stuck due to a partially feeding cartridge half on the feed ramp and half in the magazine.

You must forcefully rip the magazine from the pistol. A cartridge in the feedway will be cleared when the magazine is removed. This cartridge should fall out of the bottom of the magazine well.

Let the slide snap forward three times; this will ensure the cartridge or case in the chamber is clear. Lock the slide to the rear. Now load a fresh magazine. Let the slide run forward to chamber a fresh cartridge. This is a difficult problem to set the gun up with, using dummy cartridges, but it can be done.

Lock the slide to the rear and insert a dummy round in the chamber. Load the magazine with a dummy round, insert the magazine, and let the slide run forward. You have set up a type-three malfunction.

BE PREPARED

Most of the steps of these drills are the same as they begin, with the magazine tapped and the slide locked to the rear, but the individual malfunction demands specific remedies.

Be certain to practice clearing each one and immediately getting back into action.

Malfunctions in a gunfight are survivable but only if you are prepared. (See the sidebar for the checklist of preventative maintenance.) After all, no one wants to become toast. **CC**

REVOLVER MALFUNCTIONS

Revolver stoppages are rare, but they can happen.

Normally, if you encounter a stoppage with a revolver, it will typically take tools and time on the workbench to get the gun cleared.

“Handgun maintenance is essential to prevent malfunctions, and regular cleaning and proper lubrication are important to ensuring the handgun functions properly.”

MALFUNCTION PREVENTION CHECKLIST

- 1 Perform preventive maintenance
- 2 Routinely check the magazines, magazine springs and recoil springs
- 3 Keep the pistol clean and lubricated
- 4 Use quality ammunition
- 5 Use the proper grip to give the slide a stable platform to recoil against



This is a bad tie up, with a cartridge case in the chamber and another attempting to feed. This occurred during a test of a new handgun. It isn't that difficult to clear quickly, with practice.

THE NEW MP1-AR
BUILT IN PORTLAND, OR USA

FORGED, SPRING-LOADED JAWS
Forged for maximum strength.
Spring action for easy, one-handed use.

FRONT SIGHT TOOL AND PIN PUNCH
1/4" BIT DRIVER +12 BIT SET
Standard sized magnetic bit driver
with flat, Phillips, hex, and Torx bits.

FINE EDGE BLADE
+MOLLE-COMPATIBLE SHEATH
Full-sized blades for increased utility.
The Coyote-brown, versatile sheath carries MP1-AR and bit set.

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SUBCOMPACT SEMI-AUTOMATICS

COMPACT & CONTROLLABLE

This Concealable Gets a Lot of Attention



PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

Everything you need in one package. Subcompact semi-autos really offer the best of everything when it comes down to a concealable handgun.

Small, chambered in powerful calibers, and controllable — when buyers want a self-loading firearm, this is the one that gets most of the attention.

They are versatile, a great size for concealment purposes, and can be fitted with a wide variety of accessories, making them ideal for home defense or as a daily carry gun.

You've found what you need, right here. It's just a matter of wrapping it up — the perfect package.



Price Range: \$300-\$600

Taurus

MODEL: 709 SLIM

WEBSITE: TaurusUSA.com

MSRP: \$349

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: 9mm

Capacity: 7+1

Barrel Length: 3 inches

Length: 6 inches

Weight: 19 ounces

Features: Low profile fixed sights, ergonomic design, and snag-free controls



Taurus

MODEL: M180 Curve

WEBSITE: TaurusUSA.com

MSRP: \$392.59

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: 380 ACP

Capacity: 6+1

Barrel Length: 2.5 inches

Length: 6.2 inches

Weight: 10.2 ounces

Features: Subcompact polymer frame with a metallic subframe. The Curve is shaped to fit the contours of the human body to make it more comfortable for concealed carry. The tactical light and laser sight is incorporated right into the frame.



Bersa

MODEL: BP9CC

WEBSITE: Bersa.com

MSRP: \$429

Action: STR

Caliber: 9mm

Capacity: 8+1

Barrel Length: 3.3 inches

Length: 6.35 inches

Width: 0.94 inches

Height: 4.8 inches

Weight: 21.5 ounces

Features: White-outlined rear sight, polymer frame, rear sight interchanges with Glock.

SUBCOMPACT SEMI-AUTOMATICS



Beretta

MODEL: BU9 NANO

WEBSITE: BerettaUSA.com

MSRP: \$475

Action: STR

Caliber: 9mm

Capacity: 6+1

Barrel Length: 3 inches

Length: 5.6 inches

Width: 0.9 inches

Height: 4.2 inches

Weight: 20 ounces

Features: Adjustable sights, striker-fired, extremely small 9mm size.



Kahr Arms

MODEL: CT380

WEBSITE: Kahr.com

MSRP: \$419

Action: DAO

Caliber: 380 ACP

Capacity: 7+1

Barrel Length: 3 inches

Length: 5.5 inches

Width: .75 inches

Height: 4.4 inches

Weight: 11 ounces

Features: Double action only in operation, the Kahr fills a unique niche in the subcompact category. The CT380 is one of the smallest and thinnest 380 pistols on the market. Paired with a good IWB holster, this gun makes a great firearm for CCW holders.



Kahr Arms

MODEL: CM9

WEBSITE: Kahr.com

MSRP: \$517

Action: DAO

Caliber: 9mm

Capacity: 6+1

Barrel Length: 3 inches

Length: 6.5 inches

Width: 1.2 inches

Height: 4.2 inches

Weight: 19 ounces

Features: Polymer frame for weight reduction, very narrow, stippled grips for control.



Ruger

MODEL: SR40C

WEBSITE: Ruger.com

MSRP: \$529

Action: STR

Caliber: .40 SW

Capacity: 9+1

Barrel Length: 3.5 inches

Length: 6.9 inches

Width: 1.3 inches

Height: 4.6 inches

Weight: 23.4 ounces

Features: Interchangeable backstrap, polymer frame to save weight, ambidextrous mag release, and optional 15+1 extended magazine.

Ruger

MODEL: LC380

WEBSITE: Ruger.com

MSRP: \$449 / (\$629 for Crimson Trace Version)

Action: STR

Caliber: .380 ACP

Capacity: 7+1

Barrel Length: 3.1 inches

Length: 6.0 inches

Width: .90 inches

Height: 4.5 inches

Weight: 17.2 ounces



Features: Polymer frame with blued slide. Same size as the LC9, but chambered for the 380 cartridge for reduced recoil and a more comfortable shooting gun in extended range sessions. 3 dot sight and three internal safeties with a loaded chamber indicator.

Beretta

MODEL: PX4 STORM SUBCOMPACT

WEBSITE: BerettaUSA.com

MSRP: \$575

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: 9mm

Capacity: 13+1

Barrel Length: 3.0 inches

Length: 6.2 inches

Width: 1.4 inches

Height: 4.8 inches

Weight: 26 ounces

Features: Accessory rail, ambidextrous safety/decocker, smallest Storm.



Glock

MODEL: G27

WEBSITE: Glock.com

MSRP: \$599

Action: STR

Caliber: .40 SW

Capacity: 9+1

Barrel Length: 3.43 inches

Length: 6.5 inches

Width: 1.2 inches

Height: 4.2 inches

Weight: 20 ounces



Features: White outline rear sight, polymer frame for lightweight, combat trigger guard, double stack magazine.

SUBCOMPACT SEMI-AUTOMATICS



Glock

MODEL: G42
WEBSITE: Glock.com
MSRP: \$469
Action: STR
Caliber: .380 Auto
Capacity: 6+1
Barrel Length: 3.25 inches
Length: 5.94 inches
Width: .94 inches

Height: 4.13 inches
Weight: .87 pounds
Features: Smallest Glock ever produced, super-concealable, white outline rear sight, polymer frame for light weight, combat trigger guard, double-stack magazine.



Price Range: \$600-\$800

Glock

MODEL: G39
WEBSITE: Glock.com
MSRP: \$614
Action: STR
Caliber: .45 GAP
Capacity: 6+1
Barrel Length: 3.5 inches
Length: 6.5 inches
Width: 1.2 inches
Height: 4.2 inches
Weight: 20 ounces
Features: White outline rear sight, polymer frame for light weight, combat trigger guard, double stack magazine.



Kahr Arms

MODEL: P380
WEBSITE: Kahr.com
MSRP: \$649
Action: DAO
Caliber: .380 ACP
Capacity: 6+1
Barrel Length: 2.5 inches
Length: 4.9 inches
Width: 0.75 inches
Height: 3.9 inches
Weight: 11 ounces

Features: Textured polymer grip, very compact design, optional Crimson Trace laser, optional night sights.



Sig Sauer

MODEL: P238
WEBSITE: SigSauer.com
MSRP: \$693
Action: SA
Caliber: .380 ACP
Capacity: 6+1
Barrel Length: 2.7 inches
Length: 5.5 inches
Width: 1.1 inches
Height: 3.9 inches
Weight: 15 ounces
Features: Cocked-and-locked single action carry, 1911-style in a subcompact, many finishes/colors available.

Springfield



MODEL: XD(M) 3.8 9MM
WEBSITE: Springfield-Armory.com
MSRP: \$697
Action: STR
Caliber: 9mm
Capacity: 19+1
Barrel Length: 3.8 inches
Length: 7 inches
Height: 5.6 inches
Weight: 28 ounces

Features: Grip safety, trigger safety, fiber optic front sight, outstanding capacity, snag-free rear combat sight



Kimber

MODEL: SOLO CARRY
WEBSITE: KimberAmerica.com
MSRP: \$747
Action: STR
Caliber: 9mm
Capacity: 6+1
Barrel Length: 2.7 inches
Length: 5.5 inches
Width: 1 inch
Weight: 17 ounces
Features: Low profile white dot sights, 1911-inspired design in striker-fired configuration, three-dot combat sights, aluminum frame

Price Range: \$800 & Up




Colt

MODEL: NEW AGENT
WEBSITE: ColtsMfg.com
MSRP: \$885
Action: DAO
Caliber: .45 ACP
Capacity: 7+1
Barrel Length: 3 inches
Length: 6.75 inches
Weight: 22.5 ounces
Features: Slim-fit double diamond grips, trench-style no-snag sight milled into frame, extremely streamlined design.



Kimber

MODEL: MICRO RAPTOR
WEBSITE: KimberAmerica.com
MSRP: \$960
Action: SA
Caliber: 380
Capacity: 6+1
Barrel Length: 2.7 inches
Length: 5.5 inches
Width: 1 inch
Weight: 13.4 ounces 

Features: Stainless Slide with 3-dot tritium night sights.

COMPACT SEMI-AUTOMATICS

MID-SIZE, MAJOR DUTY

Semi-Automatics Are Big In Popularity



PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

Compact semi-automatics are incredibly popular for several reasons, including their size and capability.

The firearm is small enough to be easily concealed and large enough to be chambered in virtually all defensive calibers. It's right in the sweet spot for CCW holders and people who take their personal safety seriously.

Because this is the most prevalent category with shooters, companies put their best efforts there. Virtually all of the gun and accessory manufacturers focus their efforts on producing their best products for this group — demand drives sales.

Of course, this means there is an incredible range of firearm models from which to choose. So, join the popular crowd and reap the benefits.

Price Range: \$299-\$599

SCCY

MODEL: CPX-1

WEBSITE: SCCY.com

MSRP: \$299

Action: DAO

Caliber: 9mm

Capacity: 10+1

Barrel Length: 3.1 inches

Length: 5.7 inches

Width: 1 inch

Height: 4 inches

Weight: 15 ounces

Features: Snag-free design, lever-style slide release, all-internal hammer



Kahr Arms

MODEL: CW40

WEBSITE: Kahr.com

MSRP: \$449

Action: DAO

Caliber: .40 SW

Capacity: 6+1

Barrel Length: 3.6 inches

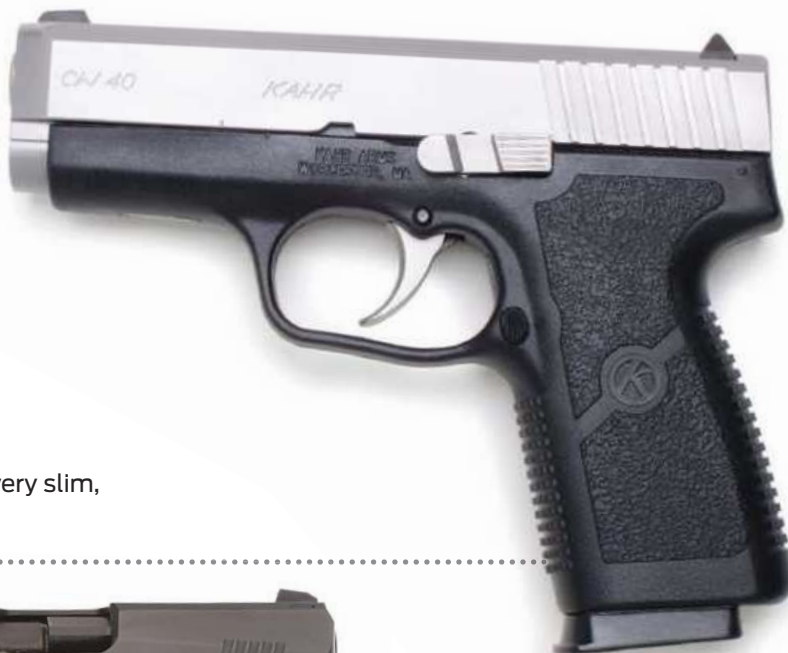
Length: 6.4 inches

Width: 0.94 inches

Height: 4.6 inches

Weight: 18.7 ounces

Features: White bar-dot sights, very slim, full-finger grip for many users



Features: Interchangeable backstraps, accessory rail, full-finger grip, concealable dimensions

Beretta

MODEL: PX4 STORM COMPACT

WEBSITE: Beretta.com

MSRP: \$599

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: .40 SW

Capacity: 12+1

Barrel Length: 3.2 inches

Length: 6.1 inches

Width: 1.4 inches

Height: 5 inches

Weight: 27 ounces

COMPACT SEMI-AUTOMATICS



EAA

MODEL: WITNESS COMPACT

WEBSITE: EAACorp.com

MSRP: \$599

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: .40 SW

Capacity: 12+1

Barrel Length: 3.6 inches

Length: 7.3 inches

Width: 1.4 inches

Height: 4.5 inches

Weight: 30 ounces

Features: Steel frame for long service life, also available in 9mm



Smith & Wesson

MODEL: M&P 40C

WEBSITE: Smith-Wesson.com

MSRP: \$569

Action: STR

Caliber: .40 SW

Capacity: 10+1

Barrel Length: 3.5 inches

Length: 6.7 inches

Width: 1.2 inches

Height: 4.3 inches

Weight: 22 ounces

Features: Steel Novak Lo-Mount sights, smallest .40 SW in the M&P line, snag-free design



CZ

MODEL: 75 D PCR COMPACT

WEBSITE: CZ-USA.com

MSRP: \$599

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: 9mm

Capacity: 14+1

Barrel Length: 3.8 inches

Length: 7.2 inches

Width: 1.4 inches

Height: 5.0 inches

Weight: 27.4 ounces

Features: Forged aluminum alloy frame, decocking lever, lightweight



Glock

MODEL: G23

WEBSITE: Glock.com

MSRP: \$599

Action: STR

Caliber: .40 SW

Capacity: 13+1

Barrel Length: 4 inches

Length: 7.4 inches

Width: 1.2 inches

Height: 5 inches

Weight: 24 ounces

Features: White outline rear sight, polymer frame for light weight, combat trigger guard, double stack magazine

Price Range: \$600-\$900

Glock

MODEL: G30SF

WEBSITE: Glock.com

MSRP: \$687

Action: STR

Caliber: .45 ACP

Capacity: 10+1

Barrel Length: 3.8 inches

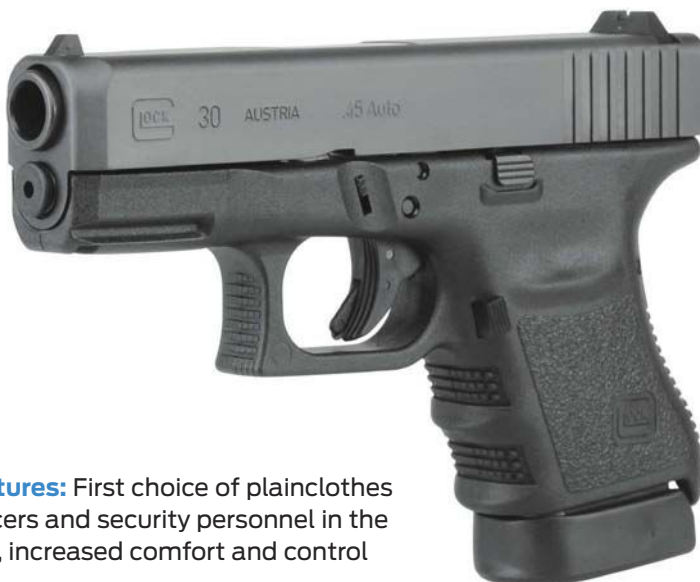
Length: 6.9 inches

Width: 1.3 inches

Height: 4.8 inches

Weight: 26 ounces

Features: First choice of plainclothes officers and security personnel in the U.S., increased comfort and control



Kahr Arms

MODEL: K40

WEBSITE: Kahr.com

MSRP: \$888

Action: DAO

Caliber: .40 SW

Capacity: 6+1

Barrel Length: 3.5 inches

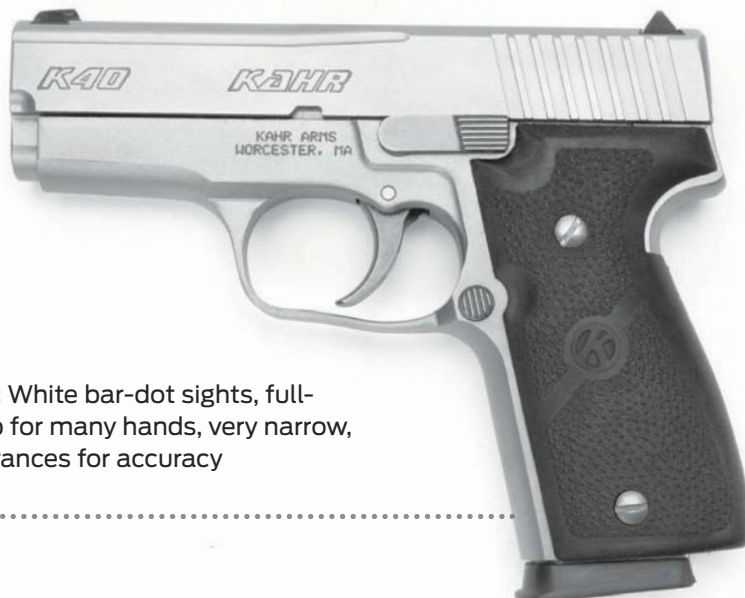
Length: 6.1 inches

Width: 0.94 inches

Height: 4.6 inches

Weight: 25 ounces

Features: White bar-dot sights, full-finger grip for many hands, very narrow, tight tolerances for accuracy



Price Range: \$900 & Up

Kimber

MODEL: Pro TLE II

WEBSITE: KimberAmerica.com

MSRP: \$1,224

Action: SA

Caliber: .45 ACP

Capacity: 7+1

Barrel Length: 4.3 inches

Length: 8.3 inches

Width: 1.3 inches

Height: 4.75 inches

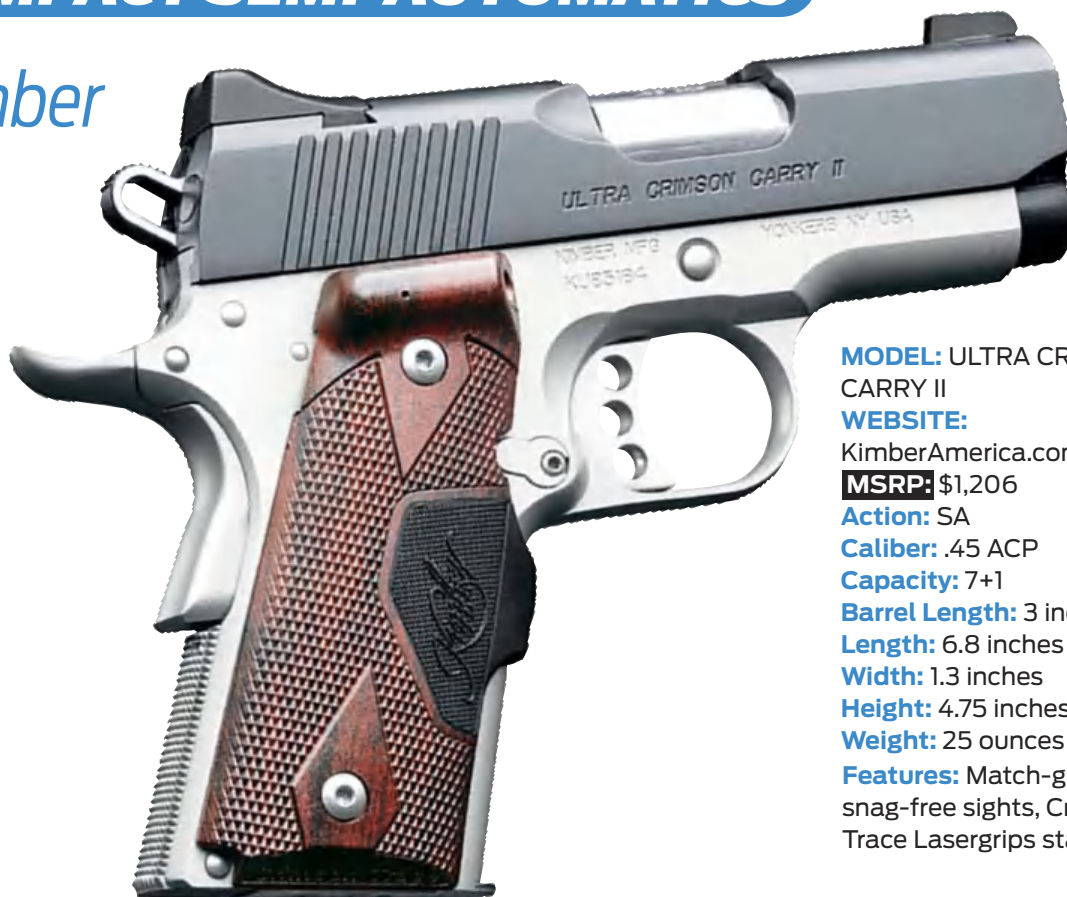
Weight: 35 ounces

Features: Stainless match barrel, threaded for suppressor, Tritium night sights



COMPACT SEMI-AUTOMATICS

Kimber



MODEL: ULTRA CRIMSON CARRY II

WEBSITE:

KimberAmerica.com

MSRP: \$1,206

Action: SA

Caliber: .45 ACP

Capacity: 7+1

Barrel Length: 3 inches

Length: 6.8 inches

Width: 1.3 inches

Height: 4.75 inches

Weight: 25 ounces

Features: Match-grade barrel, snag-free sights, Crimson Trace Lasergrips standard



Sig Sauer

MODEL: M11A1

WEBSITE: Sig-Sauer.com

MSRP: \$1,125

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: 9mm

Capacity: 15+1

Barrel Length: 3.9 inches

Length: 7.1 inches

Width: 1.5 inches

Height: 5.4 inches

Weight: 32 ounces

Features: SigLite night sights, decocker, civilian version of Navy issue sidearm, steel construction



Springfield

MODEL: CHAMPION OPERATOR

LIGHTWEIGHT 45 ACP

WEBSITE:

Springfield-Armory.com

MSRP: \$949

Action: SA

Caliber: .45 ACP

Capacity: 7+1

Barrel Length: 4.0 inches

Length: 7.6 inches

Weight: 31 ounces

Features: Commander-length barrel, full-size magazine, fully supported ramped bull barrel, integral accessory rail, beavertail safety, Novak Lo-Mount 3-dot tritium sights

Springfield



MODEL: RANGE OFFICER'S COMPACT

WEBSITE: Springfield-Armory.com

MSRP: \$1,247

Action: SA

Caliber: .45 ACP

Capacity: 6+1

Barrel Length: 4 inches

Length: 6.5 inches

Width: 1.3 inches

Height: 5.0 inches

Weight: 26 ounces

Features: "High-hand" beavertail grip safety, subcompact design, steel frame



Colt

MODEL: XSE SERIES MODEL O

WEBSITE: Colt.com

MSRP: \$944

Action: SA

Caliber: .45 ACP

Capacity: 8+1

Barrel Length: 4.25 inches

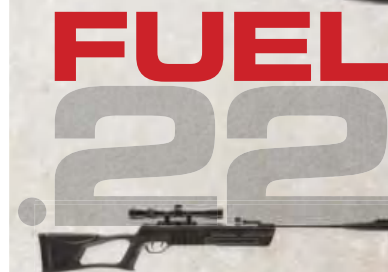
Length: 7.75 inches

Height: 5.5 inches

Weight: 34 ounces

Features: Commander length barrel, adjustable trigger, extended and ambidextrous frame-mounted safety, extended beavertail safety with palm swell [CC](#)

NITROGEN FUELED RIFLE



A .22 caliber powerhouse fueled by the ReAxis gas piston slings pellets down range at a blazing 1000 fps. Its muzzle noise is reduced by the Umarex SilencAir noise dampening system. Equipped with a built-in bipod, Lockdown Mount, and 3-9x32 scope, the Umarex Fuel is ready for steady target acquisition.

See it in action here:

www.UmarexUSA.com/firepower

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LIGHTS AND LASERS

LIGHT THE NIGHT

Top Lights & Lasers for Your Handgun



PHOTO BY SUREFIRE!

Lights and lasers.

Whether you love 'em or hate 'em, they are definitely here to stay.

Lights are very useful in a variety of situations, and not all of them involve nighttime scenarios. Lasers were once decried as a crutch and that no “real” shooter would use them. Now, thanks to excellent training and product development, both lights and lasers have found their niche.

In the next several pages, get ready to be enlightened.



Crimson Trace

MODEL: LG-639 (red) and LG-639G (green)

Website: www.CrimsonTrace.com

MSRP: \$329 (LG-639G) and \$249 (LG-639)

Features: Both feature instinctive activation on the rear of the grip and include a master on/off switch to give shooters the option to use their pistols with — or without — engaging the laser.



Streamlight

MODEL: TLR4-G

Website: www.Streamlight.com

MSRP: \$400

Features: The TLR4-G tactical light offers 115 lumens and three run modes, which are: light, laser and light plus laser. This unit operates in extreme environments and temperature ranges of -20 to 120+ degrees and uses a green laser. The green is a great choice for daylight hours, because the color green is more visible to the human eye in daylight than other colors.

LIGHTS AND LASERS

Streamlight

MODEL: TLR2-G

Website: www.Streamlight.com

MSRP: \$550

Features: The TLR2-G tactical light offers 200 lumens and three run modes: light, laser and light plus laser. This unit also has a strobe function.

Like the previous model, green is a great choice for daylight hours, because the color green is more visible to the human eye in daylight than other colors.

A black SureFire X400 Ultra (Green) light/laser combination is shown mounted on a handgun. The light is illuminated, casting a bright white beam and a green laser line. The handgun is a semi-automatic pistol with "OPERATOR CAL 45" visible on the slide. The SureFire logo is also visible on the light housing.

SureFire

MODEL: X400 Ultra (Green)

Website: www.SureFire.com

MSRP: \$790

Features: This light/laser combination features a 500-lumen white light and a 5mW green laser, which can be zeroed for the gun/ammunition. Ambidextrous push/toggle switching provides one-finger activation. Also, it has optional pressure pad for long guns and DG switches for handguns.



SureFire

MODEL: X400 Ultra (Red)

Website: www.SureFire.com

MSRP: \$595

Features: This light/laser combination also features a 500 lumen white light and a 5mW red laser. It can also be zeroed for the gun/ammunition. This is the less expensive version of the X400 Ultra Green.



LaserLyte

MODEL: CM-MK4

Website: www.LaserLyte.com

MSRP: \$149.95

Features: Ideal for small concealable guns that have a short, (.70 inch) mounting rail. The laser projects a ring of 8 red dots with a red dot in the center. The circle grows at 1 inch per yard.



LaserLyte

MODEL: CK-SW

Website: www.LaserLyte.com

MSRP: \$149.95

Features: This model is ideal for shooters who want a small powerful laser for the compact J-frame revolvers. This laser has five hours of battery life in constant On mode and 10 hours in Pulse mode.

SureFire

MODEL: 2211 WristLight

Website: www.SureFire.com

MSRP: \$495

Features: There are two versions of this popular light.

The standard 2211 features a three-way output 200-lumen beam and a 15-lumen option. Reversing the activation switch can also enable 15, 60 or 200-lumen output.

The 2211 Luminox version includes a Swiss-made Luminox wrist-watch. The MSRP for the Luminox version is \$795.




Streamlight

MODEL: PolyTac Consol and PolyTac HP

WEBSITE: www.Streamlight.com

MSRP: \$66.00 (PolyTac) and \$77.25 (PolyTac HP)

Features: The PolyTac is designed to offer downrange illumination. The HP on High setting provides illumination out to 275 meters. The PolyTac features a glass lens, while the PolyTac HP features an unbreakable, scratch-resistant polycarbonate lens. 

FULL-SIZED SEMI-AUTOMATICS

BIG POWER, BIG VERSATILITY

A Great Gun With A Greater Payoff



PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

It's the big kahuna on the block.

The full-size semi-auto pistol may be more challenging than its smaller brethren when carrying concealed, but it compensates with a big payoff.

The substantial frame allows you to easily mount accessories, such as tactical lights and lasers, turning it into an incredibly versatile gun. Their generous frames also dampen recoil if the pistol

is steel, as in the 1911 autos. Although sizeable, these semi-autos are narrow, and when combined with a good IWB holster, most of the pistol is concealable beneath clothing.

Unlike many other models, full-size semi-autos are available chambered in virtually any caliber. Combine that fact with their size and versatility, and you get the king in the concealed carry realm.

All hail the full-size semi-automatic pistol.

Price Range: \$199-\$499



Stoeger

MODEL: COUGAR

WEBSITE: StoegerIndustries.com

MSRP: \$469

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: .40 SW

Capacity: 11+1

Barrel Length: 3.6 inches

Length: 7 inches

Width: 1.3 inches

Weight: 32 ounces

Features: Ambidextrous safety/decocking lever, rotating barrel, also available in 9mm and .45 ACP

Price Range: \$499-\$599



Springfield

MODEL:

XD TACTICAL 5" .45ACP

WEBSITE:

Springfield-Armory.com

MSRP: \$562 (street)

Action: STR

Caliber: .45 ACP

Capacity: 13+1

Barrel Length: 5 inches

Length: 8.3 inches

Height: 5.8 inches

Weight: 33 ounces

Features: Grip safety, trigger safety, outstanding capacity, snag-free rear sight

Price Range: \$599-\$799



Smith & Wesson

MODEL: M&P45

WEBSITE: Smith-Wesson.com

MSRP: \$599

Action: STR

Caliber: .45 ACP

Capacity: 10+1

Barrel Length: 4.0 inches

Length: 7.5 inches

Width: 1.3 inches

Height: 5.5 inches

Weight: 28 ounces

Features: Interchangeable backstraps, white dot low-profile tactical sights, designed for duty and defensive carry



CZ

MODEL: 85 COMBAT
DUAL TONE

WEBSITE: CZ-USA.com

MSRP: \$664

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: 9mm

Capacity: 16+1

Barrel Length: 4.6 inches

Length: 8.1 inch

Weight: 35.36 ounces

Features: Ambidextrous version of CZ75, reversible magazine release, improved trigger pull

FULL-SIZED SEMI-AUTOMATICS



Glock

MODEL: G22

WEBSITE: Glock.com

MSRP: \$641

Action: STR

Caliber: .40 SW

Capacity: 15+1

Barrel Length: 4.5 inches

Length: 8.0 inches

Width: 1.2 inches

Height: 5.4 inches

Weight: 26 ounces

Features: White outline rear sight, polymer frame, combat trigger guard, double stack magazine



Walther

MODEL: P99

WEBSITE: WaltherArms.com

MSRP: \$679

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: .40 SW

Capacity: 12+1

Barrel Length: 4.1 inches

Length: 7.2 inches

Width: 1.3 inches

Height: 5.3 inches

Weight: 26 ounces

Features: Safety/decocker button, ambidextrous mag release built into trigger guard, three-dot adjustable combat sights



Glock

MODEL: G17

WEBSITE: Glock.com

MSRP: \$690

Action: STR

Caliber: 9mm

Capacity: 17+1

Barrel Length: 4.5 inches

Length: 8 inches

Width: 1.2 inches

Height: 5.4 inches

Weight: 25 ounces

Features: White outline rear sight, polymer frame, combat trigger guard, double stack magazine



Kahr Arms

MODEL: TP45

WEBSITE: Kahr.com

MSRP: \$697

Action: DAO

Caliber: .45 ACP

Capacity: 7+1

Barrel Length: 4 inches

Length: 6.6 inches

Width: 1 inch

Height: 5.3 inches

Weight: 23 ounces

Features: Bar-dot-style combat sights, single stack design for easy concealability, beneficial sight radius



Beretta

MODEL: 92FS

WEBSITE: Beretta.com

MSRP: \$682

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: 9mm

Capacity: 15+1

Barrel Length: 5 inches

Length: 8.5 inches

Width: 1.5 inch

Height: 5.4 inches

Weight: 33.3 ounces

Features: Loaded chamber indicator, reversible magazine catch, ambidextrous thumb safeties, available in stainless steel as the 92FS Inox



Sig Sauer

MODEL: P226 MK25

WEBSITE: Sig-Sauer.com

MSRP: \$1,166

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: 9mm

Capacity: 15+1

Barrel Length: 4.4 inches

Length: 7.7 inches

Width: 1.5 inches

Height: 5.5 inches

Weight: 34 ounces

Features: Decocking lever, anti-corrosion coatings on controls, anchor engraving, SIGLITE night sights



Kimber

MODEL: WARRIOR SOC

WEBSITE: KimberAmerica.com

MSRP: \$1,738

Action: SA

Caliber: 45 ACP

Capacity: 7+1

Barrel Length: 5.5 inches

Length: 9.2 inches

Width: 1.3 inches

Height: 5.3 inches

Weight: 40 ounces

Features: Picatinney Rail with Crimson Trace laser installed, based on specialized pistols built for USMC



Glock

MODEL: G34, G35,

G40, G41 MOS

WEBSITE: Glock.com

MSRP: Varies with model

Action: STR

Caliber: 9x19, 40 S&W,

45 ACP, 10mm AUTO

Capacity: Depends on caliber


Barrel Length: Varies with model

Length: Varies with model

Width: Varies with model

Height: Varies with model

Weight: Varies with model

Features: New Glock Modular Optic System allows shooters to mount a variety of optical sights onto to four models of Glock pistols in four different calibers 

THE TIMELESS 1911

John Browning's Superb Design



PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

The enduring 1911. The pistol that sprang forth from the workbench of JM Browning has endured constant use for over a century — by armies, by professional shooters of both military and law enforcement, and even by weekend plinkers. The gun's design is so nearly perfect that the best attempts by the world's greatest pistolsmiths can merely enhance it.

It remains essentially the same pistol that made its debut over a century ago.

Accurate and chambered for a variety of powerful

cartridges designed specifically for self-defense, the 1911 will most likely be in use a century from now. The number and variety of available parts and accessories for the 1911 exceed those for most other firearms — just check any catalog or dealer's website for proof.

The design is that impressive.

We bring you a selection of what we consider to be some of the best 1911s on the market today. Each is a testament to the designs' staying power.

Welcome to the 1911 club.

Price Range: \$450-\$1,000



American Classic

MODEL:

CLASSIC COMMANDER

WEBSITE:

AmericanClassic1911.com

MSRP: \$600

Action: SA

Caliber: .45 ACP

Capacity: 8+1

Barrel Length: 4.3 inches

Length: 7.5 inches

Width: 1.3 inches

Height: 5.5 inches

Weight: 37 ounces

Features: Extended beavertail grip safety, skeletonized trigger and hammer, custom features standard



American Classic

MODEL: AMIGO OFFICER'S MODEL

WEBSITE:

AmericanClassic1911.com

MSRP: \$630

Action: SA

Caliber: .45 ACP

Capacity: 7+1

Barrel Length: 3.5 inches

Length: 7.25 inches

Weight: 32.5 ounces

Features: Novak-style rear combat sight, super-compact officer-size design, lowered and flared ejection port



Remington

MODEL: 1911 R1

WEBSITE: Remington.com

MSRP: \$729

Caliber: .45 ACP

Capacity: 7 + 1

Barrel Length: 5 inches

Length: 8.5 inches

Weight: 38.5 ounces

Features: Satin black oxide, double diamond walnut stocks, 3-dot sights: dovetailed front and rear sights



Springfield

MODEL: Range Officer's Champion

WEBSITE: Springfield-Armory.com

MSRP: N/A

Action: SA

Caliber: .45 ACP

Capacity: 7+1

Barrel Length: 4 inches

Length: 7.6 inches

Height: 5.5 inches

Weight: 30 ounces

Features: Alloy frame, fully supported ramped barrel, with fiber front sight and Lo-profile rear

1911 PISTOLS

Price Range: \$1,000-\$2,000



Sig Sauer

MODEL: 1911

TRADITIONAL RTSS

WEBSITE: SigSauer.com

MSRP: \$1,142

Action: SA

Caliber: .45 ACP

Capacity: 8+1

Barrel Length: 5 inches

Length: 8.7 inches

Width: 1.4 inches

Height: 5.5 inches

Weight: 42 ounces

Features: Trijicon adjustable night sights, extended ergonomic controls, attractive style



Colt

MODEL: DEFENDER 7002D

WEBSITE: Colt.com

MSRP: \$1,015

Action: SA

Caliber: 9mm

Capacity: 8+1

Barrel Length: 3 inches

Length: 6.8 inches

Width: 1.3 inches

Weight: 25 ounces

Features: Novak low-mount carry sights, large capacity for size, 9mm caliber in a 1911-type frame



Kimber

MODEL: ULTRA CRIMSON CARRY II

WEBSITE: KimberAmerica.com

MSRP: \$1,206

Action: SA

Caliber: .45 ACP

Capacity: 7+1

Barrel Length: 3 inches

Length: 6.8 inches

Width: 1.3 inches

Height: 4.8 inches

Weight: 25 ounces

Features: Match-grade barrel, snag-free sights, Crimson Trace Lasergrips standard



Sig Sauer

MODEL: 1911 CARRY SCORPION

WEBSITE: SigSauer.com

MSRP: \$1,213

Action: SA

Caliber: .45 ACP

Capacity: 8+1

Barrel Length: 4.3 inches

Length: 7.7 inches

Width: 1.4 inches

Height: 5.5 inches

Weight: 35 ounces

Features: Low-profile night sights, Hogue G-10 grips, ambidextrous safety, accessory rail



STI

MODEL: ESCORT

WEBSITE: STIGuns.com

MSRP: \$1,299

Action: SA

Caliber: 9x19, .45 ACP

Capacity: 8+1

Barrel Length: 3.24 inches

Length: 7 inches

Weight: 30.4 ounces

Features: 3-dot adjustable combat sights, checkered cocobolo grip panels



Springfield

MODEL: EMP

WEBSITE: Springfield-Armory.com

MSRP: \$1,345

Action: SA

Caliber: 9mm

Capacity: 9+1

Barrel Length: 3 inches

Length: 6.6 inches

Width: 1.3 inches

Height: 5 inches

Weight: 28 ounces

Features: Diamond-pattern cocobolo grips, large capacity for type, tritium night sights



Springfield

MODEL: TRP

WEBSITE:

Springfield-Armory.com

MSRP: NONE LISTED

Action: SA

Caliber: .45 ACP

Capacity: 7+1

Barrel Length: 5 inches

Length: 8.6 inches

Height: 5.7 inches

Weight: 42 ounces

Features: Tactical response pistol, 20 LPI checkering on frontstrap, integral accessory rail



Smith & Wesson

MODEL: SW1911 SC E-SERIES

WEBSITE: Smith-Wesson.com

MSRP: \$1,449

Action: SA

Caliber: .45 ACP

Capacity: 8+1

Barrel Length: 4.25 inches

Length: 8 inches

Width: 1.3 inches

Height: 5.5 inches

Weight: 30 ounces

Features: Scandium alloy frame, round butt, S&W Custom Shop fit and finish

1911 PISTOLS



Colt

MODEL: 21st Century Commander

WEBSITE: Colt.com

MSRP: \$1,379

Action: SA

Caliber: .45 ACP

Capacity: 7 + 1

Barrel Length: 4.25 inches

Weight: 35 ounces

Features: Lightweight aluminum alloy, Colt beavertail grip safety, secure grip, Wiley Clapp Edition



Smith & Wesson

MODEL: SW1911 BOBTAIL CARRY

WEBSITE: Smith-Wesson.com

MSRP: \$1,539

Action: SA

Caliber: .45 ACP

Capacity: 8+1

Barrel Length: 4.25 inches

Length: 8 inches

Width: 1.3 inches

Height: 5.5 inches

Weight: 30 ounces

Features: Relieved slide, fish scale serrations, bobbed tail for increased concealability



Kimber

MODEL: MASTER CARRY PRO

WEBSITE: KimberAmerica.com

MSRP: \$1,568

Action: SA

Caliber: .45 ACP

Capacity: 8+1

Barrel Length: 4 inches

Length: 7.7 inches

Width: 1.3 inches

Height: 5.25 inches

Weight: 28 ounces

Features: Crimson Trace Master Series Lasergrips, bobbed grip frame for concealment, aluminum match-grade trigger



Kimber

MODEL: TACTICAL ENTRY II

WEBSITE: KimberAmerica.com

MSRP: \$1,490

Action: SA

Caliber: .45 ACP

Capacity: 8+1

Barrel Length: 5 inches

Length: 8.7 inches

Width: 1.3 inches

Height: 5.5 inches

Weight: 40 ounces

Features: Match grade barrel, low profile sights, Picatinney rail



Kimber

MODEL: WARRIOR SOC

WEBSITE:

KimberAmerica.com

MSRP: \$1,738

Action: SA

Caliber: .45 ACP

Capacity: 8+1

Barrel Length: 5.5 inches

Length: 9.2 inches

Width: 1.3 inches

Height: 5.5 inches

Weight: 40 ounces

Features: Threaded barrel for suppressor, tritium sights, Picatinny rail, Crimson trace laser.

Price Range: \$2,000-& Up



Dan Wesson

MODEL: VALOR

WEBSITE: CZ-USA.com

MSRP: \$2,012

Action: SA

Caliber: .45 ACP

Capacity: 8+1

Barrel Length: 5 inches

Length: 8.8 inches

Width: 1.5 inches

Height: 5.5 inches

Weight: 38 ounces

Features: Heinie straight eight adjustable night sights, match-grade barrel, undercut trigger guard for comfort



Guncrafter Industries

MODEL: CCO

WEBSITE:

GuncrafterIndustries.com

MSRP: \$2,795

Action: SA

Caliber: .45 ACP

Capacity: 7+1

Barrel Length: 4.25 inches

Length: 8 inches

Width: 1.3 inches

Height: 5.5 inches

Weight: 33 ounces

Features: Tritium snag-free night sights, enlarged beavertail grip safety, beavertail grip safety, custom fit & finish custom fit & finish CC

GUN WORLD

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world of firearms at
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COMPACT REVOLVERS

DEEP COVER

Small Guns, Big Power



PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

Practical, powerful, almost petite. Compact revolvers are chambered in a wide variety of defensive calibers and have excellent pointing characteristics. Most models have no external safeties, although they are available on some.

For decades, smaller-framed revolvers were the go-to firearms for law enforcement professionals who

wanted a small, yet reliable backup weapon. Today, the revolver still fills that unique niche of power and concealability.

If you're looking for that perfect mix of size, power and concealability, we have plenty to interest you in our buyer's guide pages.

Let us show you what you've been missing.

Price Range: \$300-\$400



Taurus

MODEL: 85

WEBSITE: TaurusUSA.com

MSRP: \$398

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: .38 SPL +P

Capacity: 5

Barrel Length: 2 inches

Length: 6.5 inches

Height: 4.3 inches

Weight: 17 ounces

Features: Compact dimensions, rated for powerful +P loads, straightforward operation



EAA

MODEL: WINDICATOR 2 INCH

WEBSITE: EAACorp.com

MSRP: \$343

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: .357 MAG

Capacity: 6

Barrel Length: 2 inches

Length: 7 inches

Weight: 30 ounces

Features: Sculpted and cushioned grips, prominent hammer spur, made in Germany



Charter Arms

MODEL: MAG PUG STANDARD

WEBSITE: CharterFirearms.com

MSRP: \$400

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: .357 MAG

Capacity: 5

Barrel Length: 2.2 inches

Weight: 23 ounces

Features: Rubber grips, easily concealable design, smooth trigger



Taurus

MODEL: 85SS2FS

WEBSITE: TaurusUSA.com

MSRP: \$371

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: .38 SPL +P

Capacity: 5

Barrel Length: 2 inches

Length: 6.5 inches

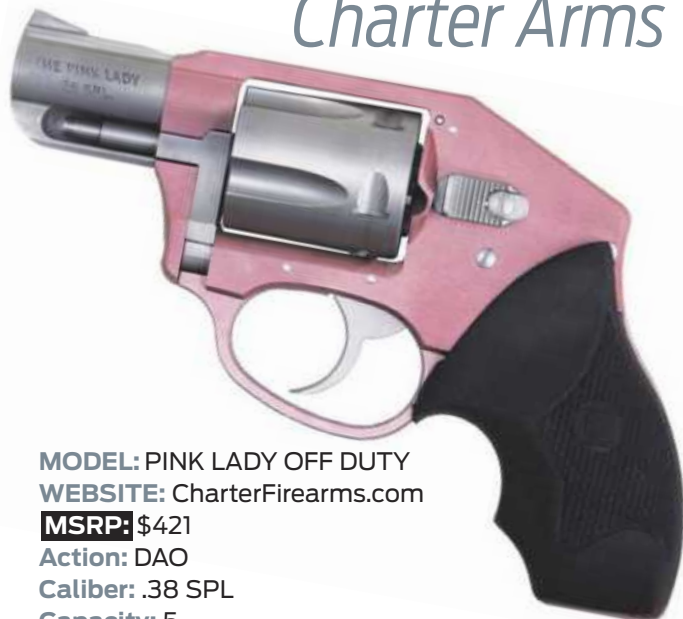
Weight: 22.2 ounces

Features: Transfer bar, Taurus Security System

COMPACT REVOLVERS

Price Range: \$400-\$500

Charter Arms



MODEL: PINK LADY OFF DUTY

WEBSITE: CharterFirearms.com

MSRP: \$421

Action: DAO

Caliber: .38 SPL

Capacity: 5

Barrel Length: 2 inches

Weight: 12 ounces

Features: Bright pink cast-aluminum frame, extreme light weight, very simple operation



Charter Arms

MODEL: BULLDOG PUG

WEBSITE: CharterFirearms.com

MSRP: \$422

Action: DAO

Caliber: .44 SPL

Capacity: 5

Barrel Length: 2.5 inches

Weight: 21 ounces

Features: Bobbed hammer design, snag-free receiver design, serious defensive caliber



Rossi

MODEL: 462

WEBSITE: RossiUSA.com

MSRP: \$455

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: .357 MAG

Capacity: 6

Barrel Length: 2 inches

Length: 6.5 inches

Weight: 26 ounces

Features: Low profile fixed sights, scalloped grips, solid firepower



Taurus

MODEL: 850B2UL

WEBSITE: TaurusUSA.com

MSRP: \$474

Action: DAO

Caliber: .38 SPL +P

Capacity: 5

Barrel Length: 2 inches

Length: 6.5 inches

Height: 4.3 inches

Weight: 18 ounces

Features: Concealed no-snag hammer, rubber grips, very light



Charter Arms

MODEL: SOUTHPAW

WEBSITE: CharterFirearms.com

MSRP: \$415

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: .38 SPL +P

Capacity: 5

Barrel Length: 2 inches

Length: 10.5 inches

Weight: 12 ounces

Features:

Dedicated left-hand model, aluminum frame for light weight, available in two-tone pink finish



Charter Arms

MODEL: UNDERCOVER LITE BLACK STD

WEBSITE: CharterFirearms.com

MSRP: \$410

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: .38 SPL +P

Capacity: 5

Barrel Length: 2 inches

Weight: 12 ounces

Features: Aluminum frame with steel, spurred hammer, integral sights



Cobra Firearms

MODEL: SHADOW

WEBSITE: CobraPistols.net

MSRP: \$425

Action: DAO

Caliber: .38 SPL +P

Capacity: 5

Barrel Length: 1.9 inches

Length: 6.4 inches

Weight: 15 ounces

Features:

Hammerless design, wide range of custom colors, integral sights

Price Range: \$500 & Up



Smith & Wesson

MODEL: 60 LS LADYSMITH

WEBSITE: Smith-Wesson.com

MSRP: \$759

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: .357 MAG/.38

S&W SPL +P

Capacity: 5

Barrel Length: 2.1 inches

Length: 6.6 inches

Weight: 21 ounces

Features: Walnut full-finger grips, fits easily in a purse or discreet holster, integral sights

COMPACT REVOLVERS



Smith & Wesson

MODEL: 686

WEBSITE: Smith-Wesson.com

MSRP: \$829

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: .357 MAG/.38 S&W SPL +P

Capacity: 6

Barrel Length: 2.5 inches

Length: 7.5 inches

Weight: 35 ounces

Features: Adjustable sights with white outline, orange insert front sight, comfortable grip



Smith & Wesson

MODEL: GOVERNOR

WEBSITE: Smith-Wesson.com

MSRP: \$869

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: .45 Colt/.410 Shotshell

Capacity: 6

Barrel Length: 2.8 inches

Length: 8.5 inches

Width: 1.75 inches

Height: 5.5 inches

Weight: 30 ounces

Features: Accepts .410 shotshells, .45 Colt and .45 ACP, integral sights, rifled barrel



Smith & Wesson

MODEL: BODYGUARD 38

WEBSITE: Smith-Wesson.com

MSRP: \$509

Action: DAO

Caliber: .38 SPL

Capacity: 5

Barrel Length: 1.9 inches

Length: 6.6 inches

Weight: 14.4 ounces

Features: Hammerless design, laser sight, integral metallic sights



Smith & Wesson

MODEL: 351C

WEBSITE: Smith-Wesson.com

MSRP: \$759

Action: DAO

Caliber: .22 MAG

Capacity: 7

Barrel Length: 1.9 inches

Length: 6.2 inches

Weight: 11 ounces

Features: Hammerless design, high capacity for size, suitable for the recoil-sensitive



Ruger

MODEL: LCR with Crimson Trace Lasergrips
WEBSITE: Ruger.com
MSRP: \$899
Action: DAO
Caliber: .357 MAG
Capacity: 5
Barrel Length: 1.9 inches
Length: 6.5 inches
Width: 1.3 inches
Height: 4.5 inches
Weight: 16.6 ounces
Features: Hammerless design, some polymer components, custom Crimson Trace LaserGrips



Ruger

MODEL: SP101
WEBSITE: Ruger.com
MSRP: \$679
Action: DA/SA
Caliber: .357 MAG
Capacity: 5
Barrel Length: 2.3 inches
Length: 7.2 inches
Weight: 26 ounces
Features: Black ramp front sight, fixed rear sight, recoil-reducing grip

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MEDIUM REVOLVERS

A GREAT BALANCE

Striking the Sweet Spot



PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

Medium revolvers hit the sweet spot. Situated between the compact revolver and its full-sized cousin, medium revolvers are the best of both worlds.

This handgun boasts excellent power for its size — usually chambered for .38 Spl or the more powerful .357 Mag. Plus, it has enough weight to dampen the effects of firing extended rounds of +P ammunition.

Although comparatively, semi-automatics get a lot of the attention (for example, show up at an International Defensive Pistol Association match with a revolver and you might get some sad looks), the revolver is fun and reliable.

Serious handgunners should not overlook the practicality of this revolver, and there are a lot of great styles. Take a look, and have some seriously reliable fun.

Price Range: \$400-\$600

Rossi

MODEL: 98104

WEBSITE: RossiUSA.com

MSRP: \$408

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: .22 LR

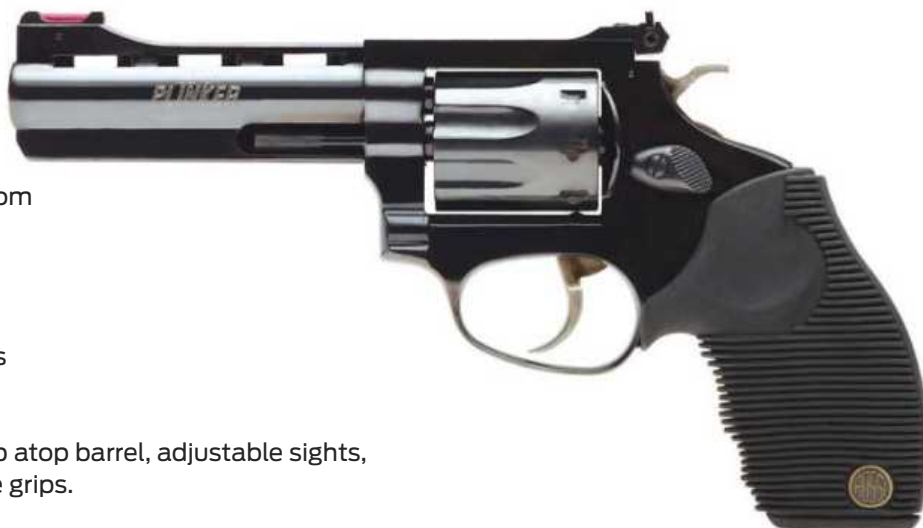
Capacity: 8

Barrel Length: 4 inches

Length: 8.5 inches

Weight: 29 ounces

Features: Ventilated rib atop barrel, adjustable sights, supremely comfortable grips.



Rossi

MODEL: R971

WEBSITE: RossiUSA.com

MSRP: \$465

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: .357 Mag

Capacity: 6

Barrel Length: 4 inches

Weight: 32 ounces

Features: Adjustable sights, molded grips, great sight radius.



Charter Arms

MODEL: BULLDOG STAINLESS STANDARD

WEBSITE: CharterFirearms.com

MSRP: \$499

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: .44 Spl

Capacity: 5

Barrel Length: 4 inches

Weight: 32 ounces

Features: 4-inch barrel stainless steel target model is fitted with adjustable sights and a longer barrel for higher velocities.



MEDIUM REVOLVERS

Charter Arms



MODEL: BULLDOG 44 SPECIAL TIGER

WEBSITE: CharterFirearms.com

MSRP: \$462

Action: DA/SA

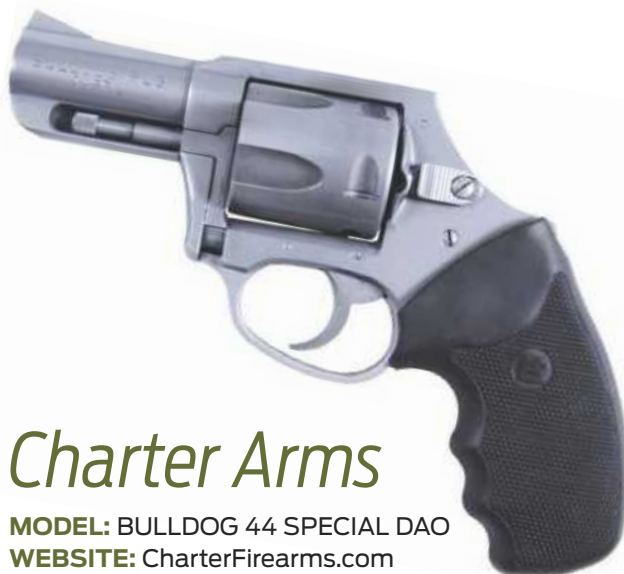
Caliber: .44 Spl

Capacity: 5

Barrel Length: 4 inches

Weight: 32 ounces

Features: Stainless steel edition of the 44 Bulldog. Coated with a tiger striped finish that is extremely durable. 4-inch barreled model is fitted with adjustable sights.



Charter Arms

MODEL: BULLDOG 44 SPECIAL DAO

WEBSITE: CharterFirearms.com

MSRP: \$426

Action: DA/SA

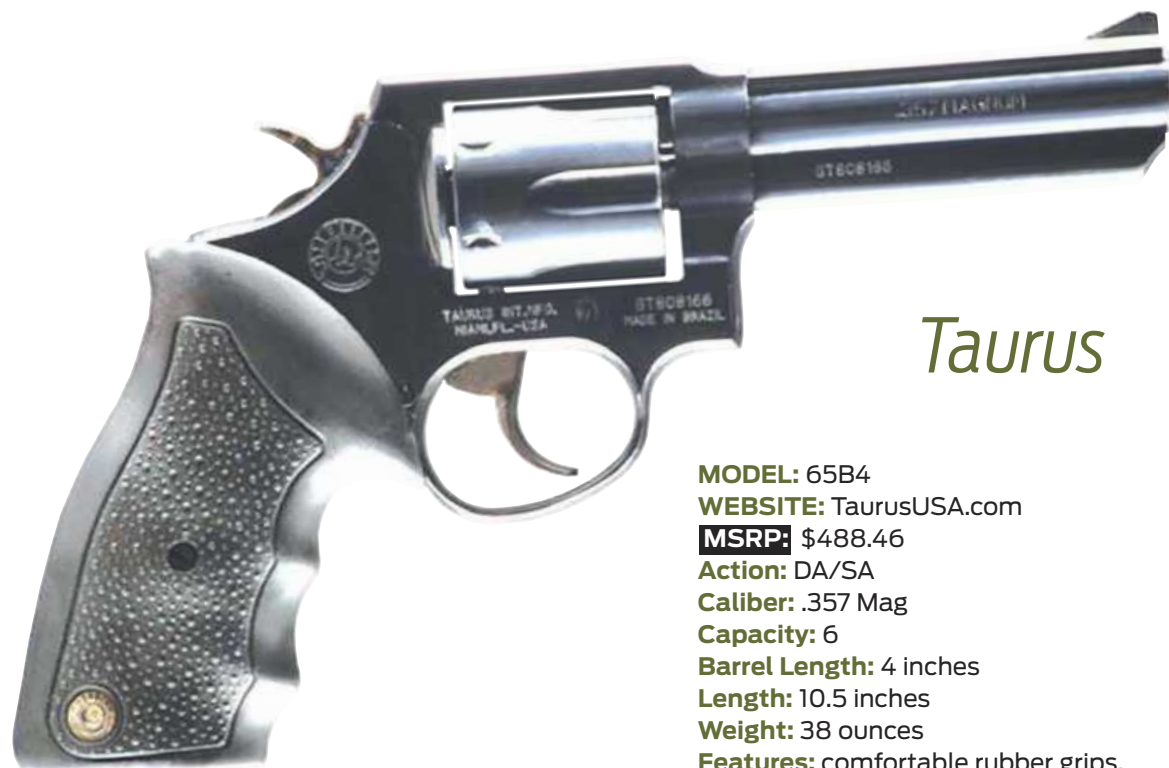
Caliber: .44 Spl

Capacity: 5

Barrel Length: 4 inches

Weight: 32 ounces

Features: Stainless steel edition of the 44 Bulldog. Double action only eliminates the hammer spur for additional concealability.



Taurus

MODEL: 65B4

WEBSITE: TaurusUSA.com

MSRP: \$488.46

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: .357 Mag

Capacity: 6

Barrel Length: 4 inches

Length: 10.5 inches

Weight: 38 ounces

Features: comfortable rubber grips, fixed sights, custom SA/DA trigger

Taurus

MODEL: 66SS4

WEBSITE: TaurusUSA.com

MSRP: \$535.77

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: .357 Mag

Capacity: 7

Barrel Length: 4 inches

Length: 10.5 inches

Weight: 38 ounces

Features: comfortable rubber grips, fixed sights, custom SA/DA trigger



Taurus

MODEL: 82B4

WEBSITE: TaurusUSA.com

MSRP: \$488.55

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: .38 Spl +P

Capacity: 6

Barrel Length: 4 inches

Length: 10.5 inches

Weight: 38 ounces

Features: Blued steel .38 Spl revolver with a 4" barrel. +P rated.

Taurus

MODEL: 4510PLYFS

WEBSITE: TaurusUSA.com

MSRP: \$514.17

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: .45 Colt/410 Shotshell
Chambering

Capacity: 5

Barrel Length: 2 inches

Length: 7.65 inches

Weight: 27 ounces

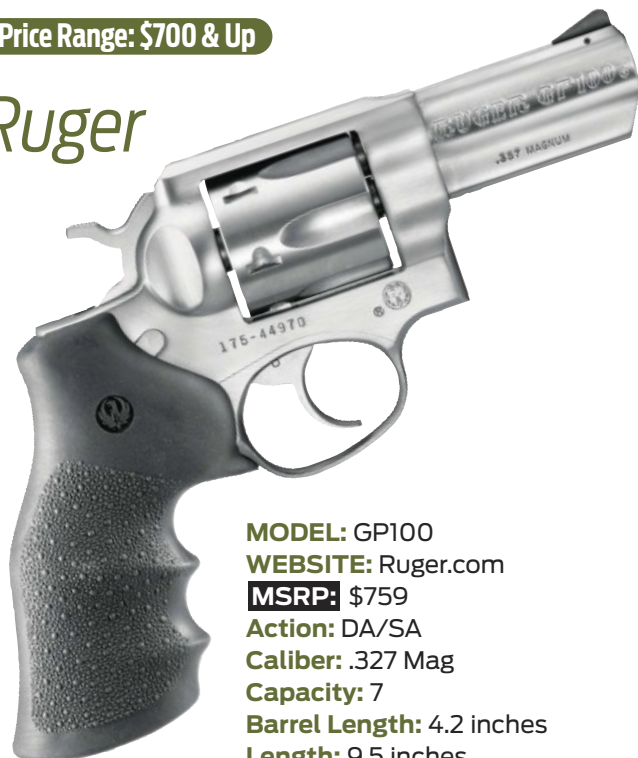
Features: Rubber Grips, extended ejector rod, and fiber optic front sight.



MEDIUM REVOLVERS

Price Range: \$700 & Up

Ruger



MODEL: GP100
WEBSITE: Ruger.com
MSRP: \$759
Action: DA/SA
Caliber: .327 Mag
Capacity: 7
Barrel Length: 4.2 inches
Length: 9.5 inches
Weight: 40 ounces

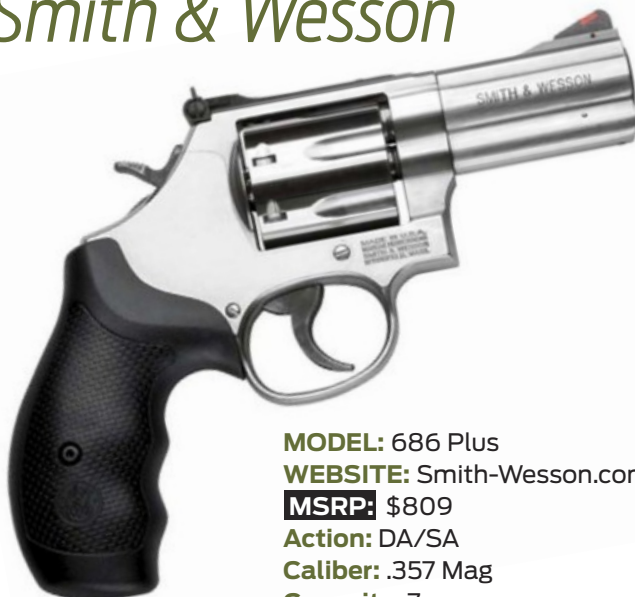
Features: Adjustable sights, palm swell grip, extra shot by virtue of unique chambering



Smith & Wesson

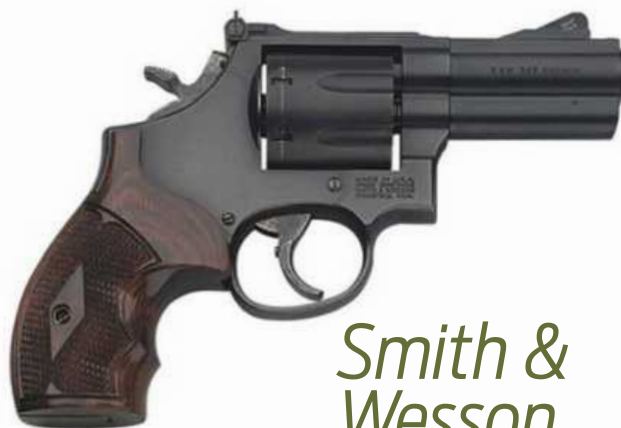
MODEL: 586
WEBSITE: Smith-Wesson.com
MSRP: \$809
Action: DA/SA
Caliber: .357 Mag
Capacity: 6
Barrel Length: 4 inches
Length: 9.25 inches
Weight: 41 ounces
Features: Red ramp front sight, comfortable grip, fantastic accuracy potential

Smith & Wesson



MODEL: 686 Plus
WEBSITE: Smith-Wesson.com
MSRP: \$809
Action: DA/SA
Caliber: .357 Mag
Capacity: 7
Barrel Length: 3 inches
Length: 8.18 inches
Weight: 41 ounces

Features: 3-inch barrel and 7 rounds of 357 Mag or .38 Spl +P power.



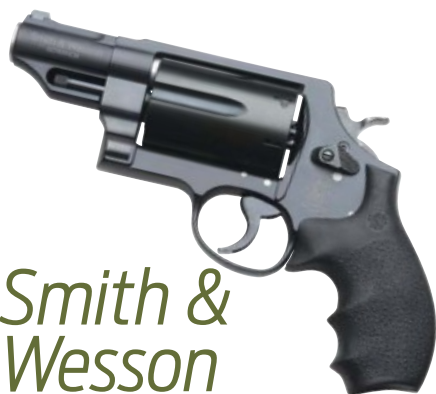
Smith & Wesson

MODEL: 586 L-COMP
WEBSITE: Smith-Wesson.com
MSRP: \$890
Action: DA/SA
Caliber: .357 Mag
Capacity: 7
Barrel Length: 3 inches
Length: 8.18 inches
Weight: 41 ounces
Features: 3-inch barrel and 7 rounds of .357 Mag or .38 Spl +P power with a full underlug barrel. Tritium front sight and adjustable rear sight.



Smith & Wesson

MODEL: 686
WEBSITE: Smith-Wesson.com
MSRP: \$829
Action: DA/SA
Caliber: .357 Mag/.38 Spl
Capacity: 6
Barrel Length: 4 inches
Length: 8.18 inches
Weight: 41 ounces
Features: 4-inch barrel and stainless steel construction. L-Frame revolver designed for heavy use.



Smith & Wesson

MODEL: GOVERNOR
WEBSITE: Smith-Wesson.com
MSRP: \$869
Action: DA/SA
Caliber: .357 Mag/.38 Spl.
Capacity: 6
Barrel Length: 4 inches
Length: 8.18 inches
Weight: 41 ounces
Features: 4-inch barrel and stainless steel construction. L-Frame revolver designed for heavy use. CC

TIGHT GROUPS

RRA 1911-A1 PS2000
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PERFORMANCE TUNED.

FULL-FRAME REVOLVERS

LARGE AND IN CHARGE

Security You Can Count On



PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

Bigger may indeed be better. Surprisingly, the larger revolvers don't get a lot of press in gun magazines, and they aren't always the first choice for many CCW holders.

However, threats aren't always the two-legged sort, and in those instances, carrying a large-framed revolver in .44

Mag or larger, especially with a short barrel, makes a lot of sense and can be very comforting. Likewise, revolvers are quite reliable and lend reassurance in a home defense situation.

So why don't large-framed revolvers get more attention? We think they should. Here's your chance to see why.

Price Range: \$200-\$700

Comanche

MODEL: COMANCHE II-A

WEBSITE: ComanchePistols.com

MSRP: \$205

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: .38 SPL

Capacity: 6

Barrel Length: 3 and 4 inches

Length: 8 inches

Weight: 33 ounces

Features: The Comanche II-A is available in blued or satin nickel finish and with a 3- and 4-inch barrel. Frame is alloy which makes it an inexpensive, lightweight carry revolver.



Rossi

MODEL: R98106

WEBSITE: RossiUSA.com

MSRP: \$407.57

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: .22 LR

Capacity: 8

Barrel Length: 6 inches

Weight: 29.5 ounces

Features: The Rossi R98106 is a full-sized revolver in 22 LR that makes a good firearm to train with if you carry a large caliber revolver. Fiber optic front sight makes shooting steel plates fun! (4-inch barrel model shown.)

Rossi

MODEL: R971

WEBSITE: RossiUSA.com

MSRP: \$465

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: .357 MAG

Capacity: 6

Barrel Length: 6 inches

Weight: 32 ounces

Features: All steel construction and chambered in .357 MAG makes the Rossi an affordable option for concealed carry.



FULL-FRAME REVOLVERS



Ruger

MODEL: REDHAWK

WEBSITE: Ruger.com

MSRP: \$699

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: .44 MAG

Capacity: 6

Barrel Length: 4.20 inches

Length: 9.12 inches

Weight: 29.5 ounces

Features: The Ruger Redhawk is a great revolver for anyone who needs to carry a large bore handgun. Stainless steel construction and chambered in .44 MAG, the Redhawk brings power, reliability and durability in an all weather firearm.

Price Range: \$700 & Up

Taurus

MODEL: 44SS4

WEBSITE: TaurusUSA.com

MSRP: \$726.59

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: .44 MAG

Capacity: 6

Barrel Length: 4 inches

Weight: 45 ounces

Features: Porting for shooting comfort, Taurus Security System, Transfer bar



Taurus

MODEL: 44SS6

WEBSITE: TaurusUSA.com

MSRP: \$742

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: .44 MAG

Capacity: 6

Barrel Length: 6.5 inches

Length: 11.6 inches

Weight: 52 ounces

Features: Tuned porting, vent rib barrel, molded recoil-absorbing grips, adjustable sights



Taurus

MODEL: 608

WEBSITE: TaurusUSA.com

MSRP: NOT LISTED

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: .357 MAG

Capacity: 6

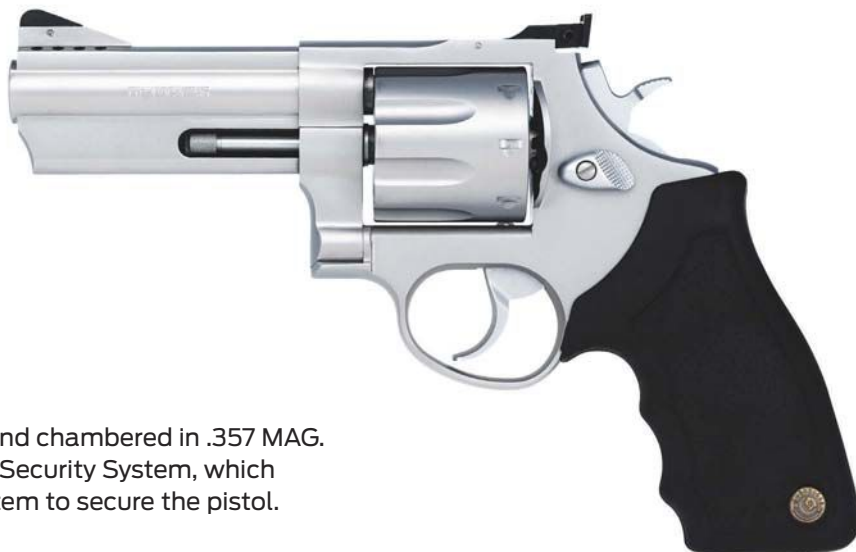
Barrel Length: 6.5 inches

Length: 11.6 inches

Weight: 52 ounces

Features: Adjustable sights, and chambered in .357 MAG.

Revolver also features Taurus Security System, which provides an instant-ready system to secure the pistol.



Taurus

MODEL: Raging 44 MAGNUM ULTRALITE

WEBSITE: TaurusUSA.com

MSRP: NOT LISTED

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: .44 MAG

Capacity: 6

Barrel Length: 2.4 inches

Length: NOT LISTED

Weight: 27 ounces

Features: Adjustable sights, and chambered in .44 MAG. Revolver also features Taurus Security System, which provides an instant-ready system to secure the pistol. Titanium Blue finish, fiber optic front sight.

Taurus

MODEL: Raging 454 CASULL

WEBSITE: TaurusUSA.com

MSRP: NOT LISTED

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: .44 MAG

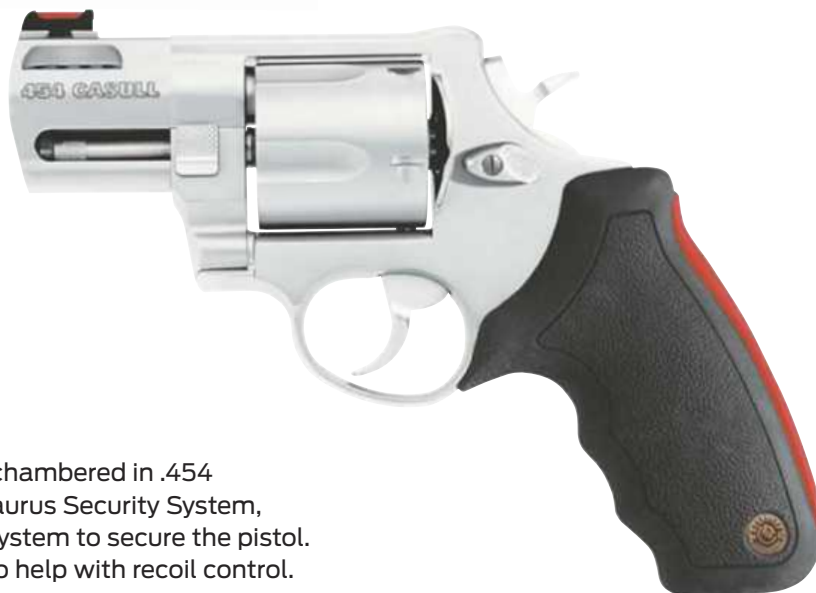
Capacity: 6

Barrel Length: 2.4 inches

Length: NOT LISTED

Weight: 27 ounces

Features: Adjustable sights, and chambered in .454 CASULL. Revolver also features Taurus Security System, which provides an instant-ready system to secure the pistol. This revolver has a ported barrel to help with recoil control.



FULL-FRAME REVOLVERS



Smith & Wesson

MODEL: 625 JM
WEBSITE: Smith-Wesson.com
MSRP: \$979
Action: DA/SA
Caliber: .45 ACP
Capacity: 6
Barrel Length: 4 inches
Length: 9.4 inches
Weight: 40 ounces
Features: Adjustable rear sight, gold bead "Patridge" front sight, custom wooden grips, tuned action, large exposed hammer.



Smith & Wesson

MODEL: 325 THUNDER RANCH
WEBSITE: Smith-Wesson.com
MSRP: \$1329
Action: DA/SA
Caliber: .45 ACP
Capacity: 6
Barrel Length: 4 inches
Length: 9.4 inches
Weight: 40 ounces
Features: Adjustable rear sight, gold bead "Patridge" front sight, Scandium frame, stainless steel barrel and cylinder. Performance Center tuned action with trigger stop.

Smith & Wesson

MODEL: M 629
WEBSITE: Smith-Wesson.com
MSRP: \$1329
Action: DA/SA
Caliber: .44 MAG
Capacity: 6
Barrel Length: 2.5 inches
Length: 7.6 inches
Weight: 39 ounces
Features: Adjustable rear sight, Performance Center tuned action. Unfluted cylinder, and chambered for the .44 MAG. Great power in a very small package.



Ruger



MODEL: SUPER REDHAWK ALASKAN

WEBSITE: Ruger.com

MSRP: \$1119.00

Action: DA/SA

Caliber: .44 MAG, 454 CASULL, 480 RUGER

Capacity: 6

Barrel Length: 2.5 inches

Length: 7.62 inches

Weight: 45.5 ounces

Features: Triple-locked cylinder provides solid lockup for the most powerful cartridges. Dual chamberings, .44 MAG can fire .44 Spl, and .44 CASULL can fire .45 LONG COLT. Comes with Hogue Monogrips for recoil absorption. **CC**



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HOLSTER PHILOSOPHY

Don't Overlook the Essentials



PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

A good handgun deserves a good holster. For as much time as you spend selecting a firearm, you should also spend a comparative time selecting an appropriate holster to go with it.

Today's holsters are well-made and specialized, using various materials from leather to synthetics. They vary in design, form, placement and function. But how do you choose the perfect holster?

Often, holster selection is dictated by need. You may use your firearm for a specific purpose, such as IDPA competition, where holster selection is guided by the rules of the game. Other times, the holster is an afterthought. You may even have several holsters for a single gun, each with a specific use.

Think of each holster as more than an accessory — it's a necessity.



[LEATHER]

Galco

MODEL: Combat Master Belt Holster

MSRP: \$88

Website: GalcoGunleather.com

Description: Offered up in black or tan, the Galco Combat Master Belt holster is a classically designed holster with a slight forward cant for a smooth presentation. This form-fitting holster works well for virtually any handgun, large or small.



[LEATHER]

Brownells

MODEL: Summer Special

MSRP: \$100

Website: Brownells.com

Description: A classic holster that's been around for decades for good reason. Solid construction and outstanding design.



[LEATHER]

Desantis

MODEL: Thumb Break Mini Slide

MSRP: \$73

Website: DesantisHolster.com

Description: Made from high quality saddle leather, this holster is constructed using double seams, and an ultra-close fit. For belts up to 1 3/4 inch wide.



[LEATHER]

Dillon Precision

MODEL: El Raton-DL 2" J-Frame S&W Revolver

MSRP: \$50

Website: DillonPrecision.com

Description: Inside the waistband pocket holster carries the S&W J-framed revolvers in a very secure and concealable pouch that won't come out when the pistol is drawn.

HOLSTERS



[LEATHER]

CrossBreed Holsters

MODEL: Purse Defender

MSRP: From \$50

Website: CrossBreedHolsters.com

Description: This holster goes inside your purse and bag and is a great way for women to carry a variety of handguns. Configurable in many ways, and a second holster and magazine carrier can also be added.



[KYDEX]

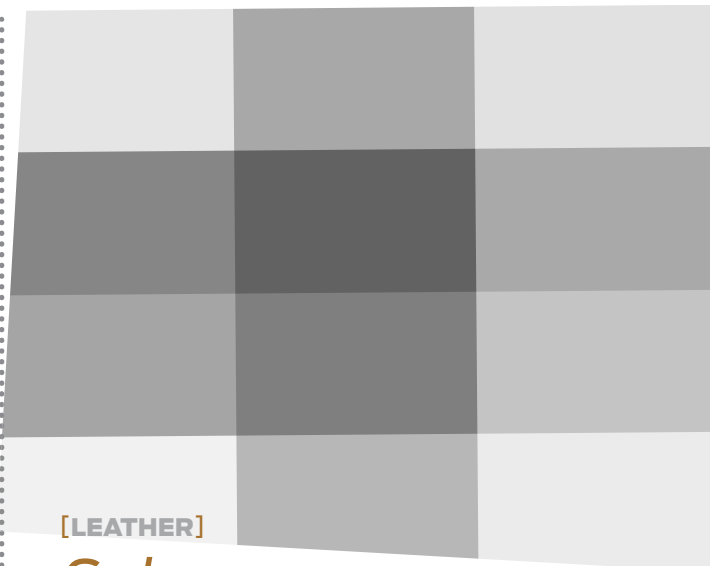
Brownells

MODEL: CTAC IWB

MSRP: \$75

Website: Brownells.com

Description: Kydex construction and uses two 1.5-inch belt clips for solid retention. 5 holes allow for cant adjustment.



[LEATHER]

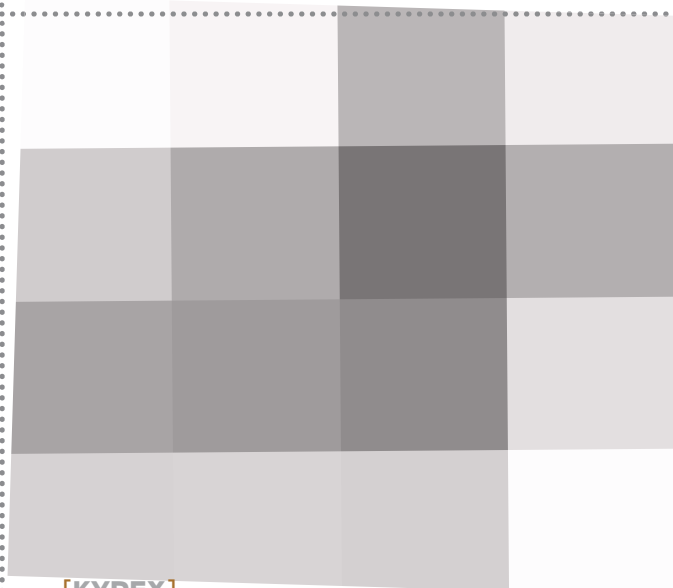
Galco

MODEL: SSS Side Snap Scabbard (Gen 2)

MSRP: \$130

Website: GalcoGunleather.com

Description: Made from quality steerhide, the side Snap Scabbard has a slight butt-forward cant making for easy draws, and an adjustable tensioner. Fits belts up to 1 1/2 inches.



[KYDEX]

Blade-Tech

MODEL: OWB Eclipse Ambi Holster

MSRP: \$80

Website: Blade-Tech.com

Description: This ambidextrous holster was designed with comfort and concealing in mind. Featuring a straight drop cant.



[LEATHER & KYDEX]

Galco

MODEL: TacSlide Belt Holster

MSRP: \$47

Website: GalcoGunleather.com

Description: The economy of Kydex with the comfort of leather. Open top, neutral cant. Makes for a fast and simple draw.



[LEATHER]

CrossBreed Holsters

MODEL: Appendix Carry

MSRP: From \$63

Website: CrossBreedHolsters.com

Description: Available for dozens of handguns, this IWB holster puts the smallest handguns in a very concealable location for super concealment. Excellent holster for the Glock 42.



[LEATHER]

Brownells

MODEL: Summer Special

MSRP: \$100

Website: Brownells.com

Description: A classic holster that's been around for decades for good reason. Solid construction and outstanding design.



[SYNTHETIC]

CrossBreed Holsters

MODEL: Bedside Backup

MSRP: From \$74

Website: CrossBreedHolsters.com

Description: Convenient and quick way to access the firearm while lying in bed. Keeps the firearms in easy reach and accessible. Patented design works with a variety of holsters and firearms types.

HOLSTERS



[SYNTHETIC]

Fobus Holsters

MODEL: J357

MSRP: From \$32

Website: FobusHolster.com

Description: Super concealable paddle holster for the 5-shot, S&W J-frame revolvers, and the Rossi M88.



[SYNTHETIC]

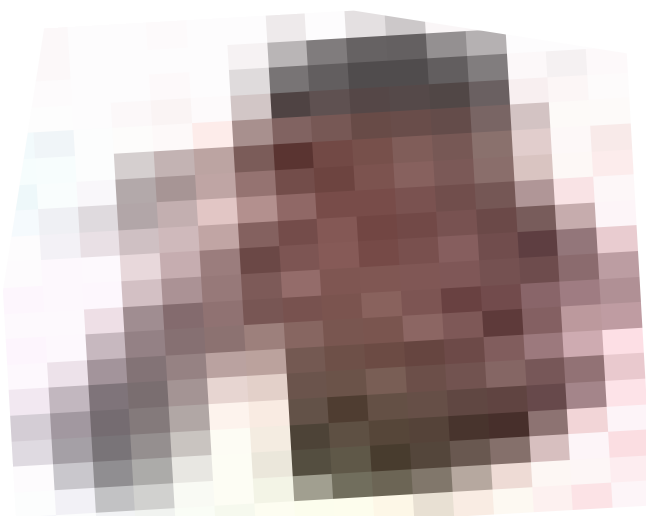
Fobus Holsters

MODEL: SG4

MSRP: From \$32

Website: FobusHolster.com

Description: Made for the Sig 229 series, this holster accepts the Sig line with or without rails. Also fits the Steyr Model-S in .357/9/40.



[LEATHER & SYNTHETIC]

Safariland Holsters

MODEL: Bianchi 135 Suppression Inside Waistband

MSRP: From \$78

Website: Safariland.com

Description: This holster has a leather outer covering with a foam padded synthetic liner for long life. Designed for deep concealment especially if the shirt has to be tucked in.



[SYNTHETIC]

Safariland Holsters

MODEL: Safariland 5378 GLS Concealment Paddle & Belt Loop Combo

MSRP: From \$53.00

Website: Safariland.com

Description: This holster comes with the Safariland GLS Grip Lock System which provides for excellent retention and is finger-deactivated when drawing. Available in a wide variety of belt slot openings and can be adjusted for cant or crossdraw. CC

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THE GREATEST **MYTH**

If Combat Accuracy Exists, What Is It and How Do You Develop It?

STORY AND PHOTOS BY GARRETT LUCAS

If you're like me and have been reading about guns for a while, you've come across the term "combat accuracy."

Having read articles on guns for 25 years, it seems like the term "combat accuracy" just came to life one day and got repeated over and over until it was a mainstay in the gun-writing world. The phrase I most often saw was, "...acceptable for combat accuracy."

What exactly is this, and how do you obtain it?

THE BEGINNING

This phrase was most commonly used in reference to the accuracy of handguns, particularly those handguns that weren't turning out

great results. When the desired standard for the mechanical accuracy of pistols is 2 inches at 25 yards, I saw quite a few gun reviews where the groups were much, much larger.

To soften the blow a bit on the results, those groupings were deemed acceptable for "combat accuracy." To be fair, a lot of those reviews weren't done from a rest, but you never really knew if it was the gun or the person shooting it.

Somewhere along the way, the "combat accuracy" phrase got turned around, and instead of being applied to just acceptable accuracy for a revolver or pistol, a transition occurred in which people started believing that combat accuracy applied to them, not



“... imagine how much those groups will open up when under stress during a violent altercation and the adrenaline is pumping.”

the gun. It became a murky mess, and, to some degree, it still is.

By blowing through a 15- or 17-round magazine at seven yards and getting some hits in the 8 to 10-inch range, some shooters convinced themselves that was good enough for combat accuracy. They were, and are, wrong.

SO, WHAT IS COMBAT ACCURACY?

I don't pretend to be an expert marksman, but, I do know enough to realize how good I'm

not. I know if I've shot a good tight group, and I know when I'm all over the place, or if it the problem is with the gun/sights. Sometimes, it's even a combination of the gun, the shooter and the ammunition.

If you do a search on “combat accuracy,” there are about 1,001 definitions. Most of those definitions loosely define combat accuracy as the ability to hit a target that's anywhere from four to eight inches in diameter, and some definitions even state that shots within 10 to 12 inches is



Two groups from my Sig P226 9mm at 15 yards with two different ammunition types.



Part of developing muscle memory is to consistently maintain the same shooting stance, grip and trigger pull during multiple shooting sessions.

“If you do a search on combat accuracy, there are about 1,001 definitions.”



One way to avoid relaxing into the “combat accuracy” mode is to use smaller targets during practice. This will force the shooter to focus more on getting tighter groups.

acceptable with distances running anywhere from 7 to 15 yards. In my opinion, this presents us with a couple of problems.

RAMIFICATIONS

First, it gives people a false sense of their abilities if they aren’t able to shoot tight groups. Consider that if a person shoots 4- to 10-inch groups at seven yards, in good conditions, imagine how much those groups will open up when under stress during a violent altercation and the adrenaline is pumping.

Conditions like tunnel vision and a sense of distorted time come into play, but most of these shooters won’t have developed enough muscle memory to overcome the loss of fine motor skills in such an encounter. Being ill-advised about their shooting ability, they could have a sense of unwarranted confidence that leads to less practice.

Now, it’s true that a shot to the torso is better than nothing at all, and if you spray enough rounds, you might get lucky and hit the sweet spot that stops an attack. Personally, I don’t want to rely on luck, and I don’t want to take the chance of hitting an innocent bystander.

That requires practice on my part to keep getting better. I want to be able to quickly put a fist-sized group on paper at 15 yards, because within seven



At 20 yards, a nice grouping was achieved by my shooting partner using a brand new 9mm pistol with an 8-round magazine.

yards (where the vast majority of shooting encounters occur), it will be that much easier to do.

The second problem comes about when “good enough” is reinforced to the student, and that results in less practice (as mentioned), but there’s also less experimentation with handguns, holsters, ammunition, sights, and combinations of all of the above.

MY OWN LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Recently, I took a few pistols to the range on a holiday weekend, and I was shooting tight groups with my CZ 75B at 15 yards using Federal 9PBLE 115gr +P+ and Federal 124gr +P ammunition. This was not a slow and steady aim-and-fire routine. This was quick combat-style shooting with rapid follow-up shots. I did almost as well with my Sig P226.

However, when I shot two similarly-styled DA/SA pistols that I purchased recently, both made by the same manufacturer, the results were so bad, I was just glad nobody was around. I already knew that one had an issue with the sights, and I figured the second one did, too. Or, so I thought.

At a later date, I let a friend of mine shoot one of those pistols. He had no problem getting decent groups with it. I then shot a couple of fairly good groups with the CZ 75B and the Sig P226 right in front of him, and to be honest, we were both dumbfounded.

HOW TO IMPROVE ACCURACY

- Work on the fundamentals of marksmanship
- Understand the capabilities and limitations of the firearms
- Practice frequently
- Practice fundamentals to develop muscle memory



The difference in the length of the sight radius of these two pistols is apparent. Obtaining better accuracy is typically easier from a firearm with a longer sight radius.



One way to avoid relaxing into the “combat accuracy” mode is to use smaller targets during practice. This will force the shooter to focus more on getting tighter groups.

KEY NUMBERS

15

The distance in yards that the author wants to be able to put a fist-sized group on paper

7

In yards, the distance in which the vast majority of shooting encounters occur

We couldn't figure out why the groups were so bad for me when I shot well with the others.

Since I had the same issue with both pistols made in a similar style, the only thing we could figure was there was something in the handling or ergonomics of those two pistols that was working against me. I guess the point is I wouldn't have known that had I not practiced and found the issue with those particular handguns.

The groups I shot with those two pistols are what some might consider acceptable combat accuracy. To me, they were just plain lousy. I don't buy into the combat accuracy theory. There is only accuracy. Sure, during combat, groups will open up as the adrenaline hits and people or objects move, but that's why it's all the more important to practice true marksmanship at the range, along with doing different drills to prepare for the moment you may have to defend yourself.

LEAVING THE EXCUSE BEHIND

My belief is that focusing on the fundamentals of marksmanship, understanding the capabilities and limitations of the firearms we are using, and practicing frequently will pay off huge dividends rather than putting some shots on a dinner-plate-sized target at seven yards and calling it a day. Practicing those fundamentals will help the shooter develop muscle memory over time that the body will switch to in times of stress.

Understanding the capabilities of your weapon is also a vital part of improving accuracy. A short-barrel revolver or pistol can be just as inherently accurate as their longer-barrel counterparts, but a longer barrel increases the sight radius and allows the individual to more

“... combat accuracy is the ability to quickly and deliberately place shots in the critical zones necessary to immediately stop a threat.”

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“... getting some hits in the 8- to 10-inch range, some shooters convinced themselves that was good enough for combat accuracy. They were, and are, wrong.”



One issue with using large targets is that some folks are lulled into a false sense of complacency if they get shots on paper. If shooting defensively, the shooter needs to be able to hit vital zones to immediately stop the threat.

FACTORS THAT AFFECT ACCURACY

- 1** The violence of the situation
- 2** The adrenaline that is pumping during such an encounter
- 3** Tunnel vision
- 4** Time distortion



With just a groove for the rear sight and a stainless front sight, more accurate groups will be usually be turned in by the Bond Arms Derringer under 7 yards with .45 Colt Rounds. Using 4-10 specialty defense ammo, including discs and buckshot, the usability of the derringer is greatly improved, and the results can be devastating.

easily notice changes and make corrections in sight alignment.

In a shooter's hands, a small-frame .357 Magnum with a sight groove and a black front ramp on a two-inch barrel is going to be much less forgiving with staying on target than one with a six-inch barrel and high-visibility, adjustable sights.

THE LAST WORD

So, have we figured out what combat accuracy is, exactly?

For me, it is a myth. Some will disagree, but that's okay. Everyone has the right to do what's best for them.

If I had to actually use the phrase, I would say that combat accuracy is the ability to quickly and deliberately place shots in the critical zones necessary to immediately stop a threat. But, that's not really in line with most of what I'm reading out there.



Key parts of improving shot placement is to try different ammunition, sights, and handguns that work best for you, and to practice repeatedly at different distances while performing different drills, so the process becomes instinctual.

By practicing the fundamentals of drawing the weapon, obtaining a proper sight picture, and getting accurate groups, the shooter can gradually speed up to transition from just target shooting to actual defensive shooting — provided that the original accuracy (or close to it) is maintained. By adhering to that

regimen, I have a feeling that combat accuracy will take care of itself. [CC](#)


Garrett Lucas has been an outdoors and preparedness enthusiast for twenty-five years. His areas of interest and expertise include firearms, edged tools, and preparedness. He has written articles on these topics for over eight years.

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FINAL SHOT



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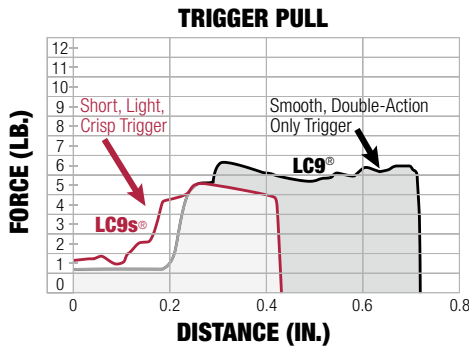
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